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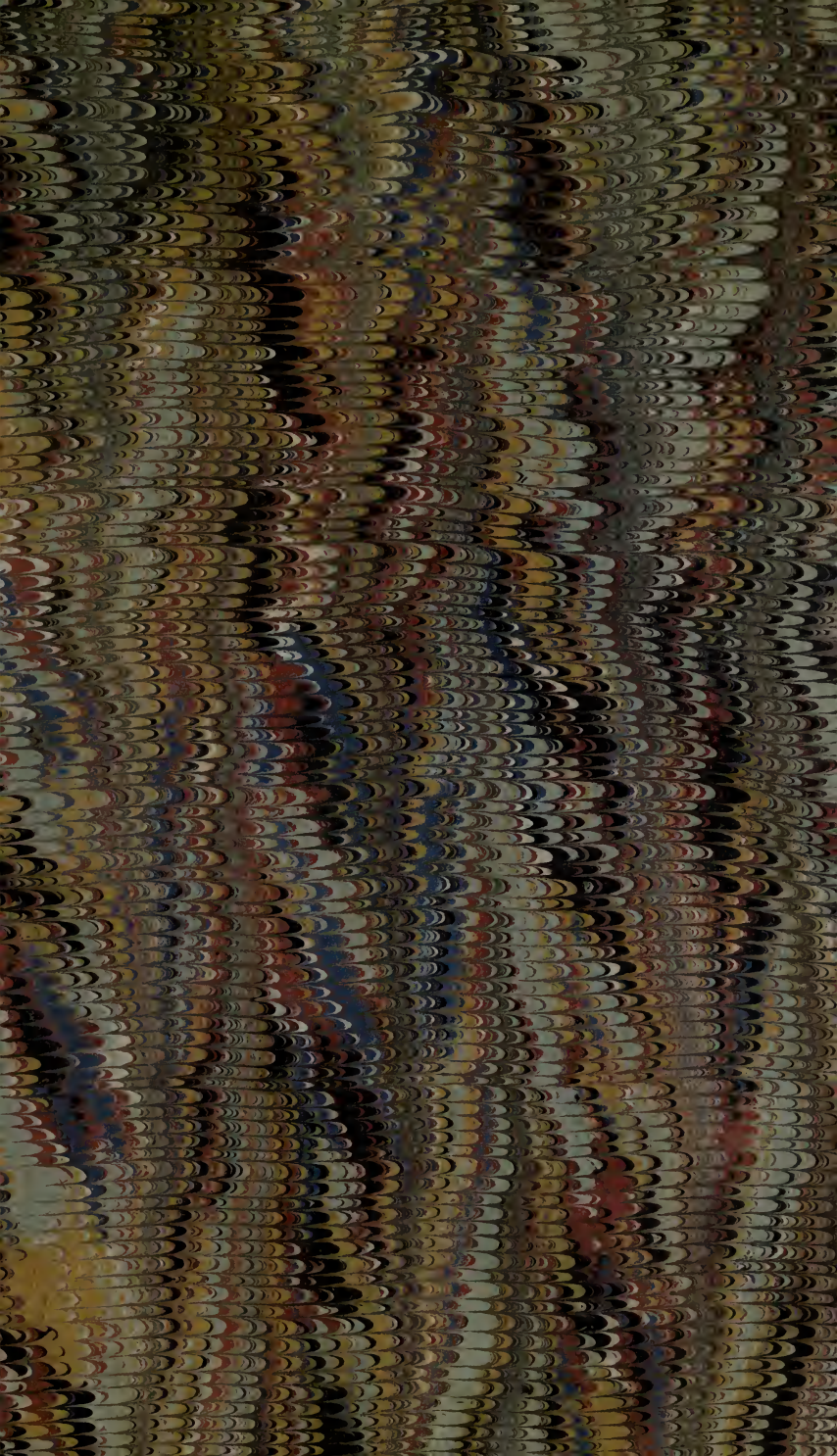
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REIGN OF

CHARLES



*From the Author*

THE

ROMAN-CATHOLIC DOCTRINE  
OF THE EUCHARIST  
CONSIDERED.



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THE  
ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINE  
OF THE EUCHARIST

CONSIDERED

IN REPLY TO

DR WISEMAN'S ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE.

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BY THOMAS TURTON, D.D.,

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN the course of the year 1836, Dr Wiseman published a volume of Lectures, "On the Real Presence of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the blessed Eucharist:" also two volumes of Lectures, "On the principal doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church." The first-mentioned volume, containing Lectures which had been several times read to the students in the English College at Rome, exhibits the argument, for "the Real Presence," in a more systematic form than we can expect it to assume, in the two volumes of Lectures, or Discourses, addressed to a mixed audience in the Roman Catholic Chapel, Moorfields. To those College Lectures, therefore, the reader's attention will be directed in the following pages; not, however, without an incidental reference to such additional observations as may be presented by the more popular method of discussion, which the learned author naturally adopted, when speaking from the pulpit.

On perusing the Lectures on the Eucharist, they appeared—whatever the cause might be—to

contain so many false principles—so many erroneous statements—so much incorrect reasoning—so many inconsequent conclusions—that I was impelled, by a sense of duty, to point out the various transgressions, in all those respects, which had occurred to me, during my progress through the work. This I have endeavoured to do; and although sufficiently sensible of the important improvements, in the treatment of the subject, which a larger portion of leisure would have enabled me to effect—I now submit my observations on the Lectures, to the judgment of the world.

In the midst of continual interruptions, the greatest care cannot always prevent mistakes; but I feel, at least, the consciousness of having represented every thing faithfully. If indeed, in any part of this volume, there should appear, to an intelligent and impartial reader, a single principle purposely fallacious—a single statement designedly incorrect—a single argument calculated to mislead—a single conclusion obviously unwarranted by the premises—I entreat him to close the book, and never to consider another sentence, which it contains, as worthy of the slightest notice.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE Church of Rome has determined, that—on consecrating the elements of bread and wine, at the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—the whole substance of the bread is changed into the substance of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. The process, by which this change is effected, is denominated Transubstantiation; and the change is held to be of such a kind, that, under the semblance of bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ himself becomes truly and corporeally present—present in his Divine, as well as in his human nature. This Roman Catholic doctrine of 'the Real Presence,' it is Dr Wiseman's object to establish, on the foundation of Holy Writ.

To avoid all chance of mis-statement, I shall give the declarations of the Council of Trent; which are understood to preserve, in its most authentic form, this distinguishing tenet of the Church of Rome. Dr Wiseman, in conformity

with that celebrated Synod, has professed his belief that “that, which was originally bread and wine, is, by the consecration, changed into the substance of the body and blood of our Lord, together with his soul and divinity, in other words, his complete and entire person\*.” Moreover, the learned writer and preacher, in delivering his London Discourses, appears to have devoted a few of the last to this topic—as “the most important, the most solemn, the most beautiful, the most perfect of all:”—

πάν ὃ εὖ λείπας, χρυσέην ἐπέθηκε κορώνην. HOM.

One grand argument, in favour of this doctrine of Transubstantiation, is drawn from the sixth chapter of St John’s Gospel: another from the terms employed in instituting the Lord’s Supper, as recorded by St Matthew, St Mark, St Luke, and St Paul. To these arguments, Dr Wiseman

\* “Semper hæc fides in Ecclesiâ Dei fuit, statim post consecrationem, verum Domini nostri corpus, verumque ejus sanguinem, sub panis et vini specie, unâ cum ipsius animâ et divinitate existere.” Sess. xiii. c. 3. Again, “Persuasum semper in Ecclesiâ Dei fuit, idque nunc denuò sancta hæc synodus declarat, per consecrationem panis et vini, conversionem fieri totius substantiæ panis in substantiam corporis Christi Domini nostri, et totius substantiæ vini in substantiam sanguinis ejus.” Sess. xiii. c. 4. See also Dr Wiseman’s Lectures on the Doctrines, &c. Vol. II. pp. 135, 136. Let me observe that, in future, I shall cite the Lectures delivered in London simply as ‘Discourses’; by which means they will be fully distinguished from the volume of College Lectures...It is singular that, in the doctrine as laid down in *the Lectures*, no mention should have been made of our Lord’s *soul and divinity* as conjoined with “the presence” after consecration; while that circumstance is distinctly stated in *the Discourses*.



has devoted eight lectures; the first four, relating to the sixth chapter of St John—the last four, to the terms of Institution. In consequence of this arrangement, the present work will consist of two parts, each part comprising four sections; so that no division of the learned author's volume will be dismissed without a separate notice.

The consideration of the sixth chapter of St John involves the following particulars: 1. The structure of the chapter; 2. The change of subject in the latter part of it; 3. Jewish Prejudices, and mode of interpreting our Lord's discourse; 4. Our Lord's answer to the Jews, and his conduct to his Disciples.

The consideration of the terms of Institution leads to the following topics: 1. The mode of interpreting the words of Institution: *may* they be understood figuratively? 2. The mode of interpreting the words of Institution: *must* they be understood figuratively? 3. Objections to a literal interpretation; 4. St Paul's doctrine of the Eucharist.

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The sixth chapter of St John is almost wholly occupied by an account of the miraculous feeding of five thousand persons, by means of five loaves and two small fishes; our Lord's subsequent discourse; and the effects, as well of the miracle as the discourse, upon the minds both of the Jews

in general and the disciples in particular.....On the day after that on which the miracle had been wrought, the multitudes appear to have sought Jesus with great anxiety; and having at last found him, "said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" The answer to this question introduces the long passage which is the immediate object of our attention; and being desirous that the reader should have an opportunity of referring to it at any moment, I follow Dr Wiseman's example, and give the remainder of the chapter, in the Original and in our Authorized Version.

26 Ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ζητεῖτέ με οὐχ ὅτι εἶδετε σημεῖα, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐφάγετε ἐκ τῶν ἄρτων καὶ ἐχορτάσθητε.

27 Ἐργάζεσθε μὴ τὴν βρωσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην, ἀλλὰ τὴν βρωσιν τὴν μένουσαν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ἣν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὑμῖν δώσει· τοῦτον γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ἐσφράγισεν ὁ Θεός.

28 Εἶπον οὖν πρὸς αὐτόν, Τί ποιῶμεν, ἵνα ἐργαζώμεθα τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Θεοῦ;

29 Ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα πιστεύσητε εἰς ὃν ἀπέστειλεν ἐκεῖνος.

30 Εἶπον οὖν αὐτῷ, Τί οὖν ποιεῖς σὺ σημεῖον, ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμέν σοι; τί ἐργάζῃ;

31 Οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν τὸ μάννα ἐφαγον ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, καθὼς ἐστι γεγραμμένον, Ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς φαγεῖν.

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, Οὐ Μωσῆς δέδωκεν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ· ἀλλ' ὁ πατήρ μου δίδωσιν ὑμῖν τὸν ἄρτον ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ τὸν ἀληθινόν.

33 Ὁ γὰρ ἄρτος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐστὶν ὁ καταβαίνων ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ ζωὴν δίδους τῷ κόσμῳ.

34 Εἶπον οὖν πρὸς αὐτόν, Κύριε, πάντοτε δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρτον τούτον.

35 Εἶπε δὲ αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς· ὁ ἐρχόμενος πρὸς με οὐ μὴ πεινάσῃ, καὶ ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ πώποτε.

36 Ἄλλ' εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι καὶ ἐωράκατέ με, καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε.

37 Πάν ὃ δίδωσί μοι ὁ πατήρ, πρὸς ἐμέ ἥξει· καὶ τὸν ἐρχόμενον πρὸς με οὐ μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω.

38 Ὅτι καταβέβηκα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, οὐχ ἵνα ποιῶ τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἐμὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με.

39 Τοῦτο δέ ἐστι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με πατρός, ἵνα πᾶν ὃ δέδωκέ μοι, μὴ ἀπολέσω ἐξ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸ ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

40 Τοῦτο δέ ἐστι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ θεωρῶν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ ἀναστήσῃ αὐτὸν ἐγὼ τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

41 Ἐγόγγυζον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι εἶπεν, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ καταβάς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

42 Καὶ ἔλεγον, Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωσήφ, οὗ ἡμεῖς οἶδαμεν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα; πῶς οὖν λέγει

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven:

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then

οὗτος, "Οτι ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβέβηκα;

43 Ἀπεκρίθη οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Μὴ γογγύζετε μετ' ἀλλήλων.

44 Οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με, εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ ὁ πέμψας με ἐλκύσῃ αὐτόν· καὶ ἐγὼ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

45 Ἔστι γεγραμμένον ἐν τοῖς προφήταις, Καὶ ἔσονται πάντες διδασκτοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ. πᾶς οὖν ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ μαθὼν ἔρχεται πρὸς με.

46 Οὐχ ὅτι τὸν πατέρα τὶς ἐώρακεν, εἰ μὴ ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὗτος ἐώρακε τὸν πατέρα.

47 Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὁ πιστεύων εἰς ἐμέ ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

48 Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς.

49 Οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν ἔφαγον τὸ μάννα ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, καὶ ἀπέθανον·

50 Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβαίνων, ἵνα τὶς ἐξ αὐτοῦ φάγῃ καὶ μὴ ἀποθάνῃ.

51 Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ζῶν ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς· εἰάν τις φάγῃ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ἄρτου, ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα· καὶ ὁ ἄρτος δὲ ὃν ἐγὼ δώσω, ἡ σὰρξ μου ἐστίν, ἣν ἐγὼ δώσω ὑπὲρ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ζωῆς.

52 Ἐμάχοντο οὖν πρὸς ἀλλήλους οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, λέγοντες, Πῶς δύναται οὗτος ἡμῖν δοῦναι τὴν σάρκα φαγεῖν;

53 Εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, εἰ μὴ φάγητε τὴν σάρκα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, καὶ πίνητε αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα, οὐκ ἔχετε ζωὴν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.

54 Ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα, καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα, ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ ἐγὼ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead:

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.



55 Ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ μου ἀληθῶς ἐστὶ βρώσις, καὶ τὸ αἷμά μου ἀληθῶς ἐστὶ πόσις.

56 Ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα, καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα, ἐν ἐμοὶ μένει, καὶ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῷ.

57 Καθὼς ἀπέστειλέ με ὁ ζῶν πατήρ, καὶ γὰρ ζῶ διὰ τὸν πατέρα· καὶ ὁ τρώγων με, καὶ κεῖνος ζήσεται δι' ἐμέ.

58 Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς· οὐ καθὼς ἔφαγον οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν τὸ μάννα, καὶ ἀπέθανον· ὁ τρώγων τοῦτον τὸν ἄρτον ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

59 Ταῦτα εἶπεν ἐν συναγωγῇ διδάσκων ἐν Καπερναούμ.

60 Πολλοὶ οὖν ἀκούσαντες ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἶπον, Σκληρός ἐστιν οὗτος ὁ λόγος· τίς δύναται αὐτοῦ ἀκούειν;

61 Εἰδὼς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν ἑαυτῷ, ὅτι γογγύζουσι περὶ τούτου οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτο ὑμεῖς σκανδαλίζετε;

62 Ἐὰν οὖν θεωρῇτε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀναβαίνοντα ὅπου ἦν τὸ πρότερον.

63 Τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ ζωοποιῶν, ἡ σὰρξ οὐκ ὠφελεῖ οὐδέν· τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λαλῶ ὑμῖν, πνεῦμά ἐστι καὶ ζωή ἐστιν.

64 Ἄλλ' εἰσὶν ἐξ ὑμῶν τινὲς οἳ οὐ πιστεύουσιν. ἤδει γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, τίνες εἰσὶν οἳ μὴ πιστεύοντες, καὶ τίς ἐστιν ὁ παραδώσων αὐτόν.

65 Καὶ ἔλεγε, Διὰ τοῦτο εἶρηκα ὑμῖν, ὅτι οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με, εἰὰ μὴ ἡ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μου.

66 Ἐκ τούτου πολλοὶ ἀπῆλθον τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω, καὶ οὐκέτι μετ' αὐτοῦ περιεπάτουν.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

66 ¶ From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.



67 Εἶπεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς δώδεκα, Μὴ καὶ ὑμεῖς θέλετε ὑπάγειν;

68 Ἀπεκρίθη οὖν αὐτῷ Σίμων Πέτρος, Κύριε, πρὸς τίνα ἀπελευσόμεθα; ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου ἔχεις·

69 Καὶ ἡμεῖς πεπιστεύκαμεν καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν, ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.

70 Ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Οὐκ ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς τοὺς δώδεκα ἐξελεξάμην, καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν εἷς διάβολος ἐστίν;

71 Ἐλεγε δὲ τὸν Ἰούδαν Σίμωνος Ἰσκαριώτην· οὗτος γὰρ ἤμελλεν αὐτὸν παραδιδόναι, εἰς ὧν ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life?

69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

## **PART THE FIRST.**

### **EXAMINATION OF THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN'S GOSPEL.**



## PART I. SECTION I.

STRUCTURE OF THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN.

---

THE question now to be considered is this—Supposing that portion of this sixth chapter, which is included between the 26th and the 58th verses, to be divided into two parts, where does the sense, or turn of expression of the passage, require the line of division to be drawn? or, to state the question more precisely, Is the line to be drawn immediately after, or immediately before, the 47th verse? or, in still different words, Is the 47th verse to be connected with that which precedes, or that which follows?—In what manner the determination of this point is brought to bear upon the main subject of enquiry will probably not be very apparent; and, in fact, had better, as yet, remain in obscurity. The most effectual method, of guarding against an unfair judgment, will be, to examine the passage without reference to Theological opinions. For the sake of clearness, however, it seems requisite to observe that, while Dr Wiseman “has no hesitation whatever” in attaching the 47th verse to the preceding part of the discourse, the author of these pages is thoroughly satisfied that the verse belongs to the succeeding part. The more effectually,

moreover, to engage the reader's attention during the following investigation, which might otherwise appear unwarrantably long, I may be allowed to state, that a decision, in favour of the former of those opinions, will in Dr Wiseman's estimation "materially advance the strength of the arguments" upon which he depends; that a decision, in favour of the latter, will deprive some of his favourite arguments of their only support; and that by studying the subject, much light will be thrown upon the kind of reasoning which *may* be employed by a controversial writer, in support of an hypothesis. If, after all, the reader, solely from a perusal of the discourse, should be convinced that Dr Wiseman is wrong, there can be no great harm in passing on, without delay, to the second section; although I do trust that he will have the courage and patience to read the first section, with the greatest possible care.

I now proceed to extract and examine, one by one, the reasons by which the learned lecturer has endeavoured to justify his determination. The first reason is thus expressed:

"Verse 47 seems to me to form an appropriate close to a division of discourse, by the emphatic asseveration *amen* prefixed to a manifest summary and epilogue of all the preceding doctrine. 'Amen, amen, I say unto you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life.' Compare vv. 35, 37, 45. Verse 48 lays down a clear proposition, 'I am the bread of life,' suggested by the preceding words, and just suited for the opening of a new discourse." (p. 41.)



Dr Wiseman, constantly quoting in his Lectures the Douay or Rhemish Version, retains the word *amen*, instead of the ordinary rendering *verily*. The reader will bear this in mind; recollecting at the same time that, *at the beginning of a sentence*, *verily* conveys, with all possible exactness, the meaning of the original word. On referring to passages presenting the word in such a position, we find that what St Matthew (xvi. 28) expresses by *amen*, St Luke (ix. 27) expresses by *verily* (ἀληθῶς); and that in Luke iv. 24, 25, *amen* and *of a truth* (ἐπ' ἀληθείας) are employed as equivalent terms. The word, whether single or repeated, is, when used at the beginning of a sentence, peculiar to our Lord; and, in that position, can scarcely ever be affirmed to be to a certainty designed simply to ratify what has preceded. It appears to have been employed in the opening and continuation of his addresses, for the purpose of exciting attention; and with the farther object of giving the greatest solemnity and effect to the sentiments immediately succeeding. These things are stated at the very outset of my remarks, in opposition to Dr Wiseman's notion, that "the emphatic asseveration *amen*" is "prefixed to a manifest summary and epilogue of the preceding doctrine," which thus forms "an appropriate close to a division of discourse." They are, however, to be taken as not unimportant, but still as little more than an expression of opinion respecting matters which will be

sufficiently developed in the ensuing pages. With regard, indeed, to the natural bearing of the 47th verse, nothing more, than the sight of it, along with the adjacent verses, can be required, to decide that point...“46. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father. 47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48. I am that bread of life.”...The obscurity of the relation between the 46th and 47th verses, compared with the distinctness of the connexion between the 47th and 48th verses is amply sufficient to show that the 47th verse either gives out a new subject, or resumes a subject partly discussed. How is it possible for any one, who has a due feeling for what he reads on such a subject, to disjoin two verses, in the former of which our Lord calls upon men to believe on him that they may have everlasting life—in the latter, describes himself as the bread of life? Dr Wiseman himself, indeed, seems fully aware that the traces of a change of subject immediately *after* the 47th verse are evanescent; for he finally refers, as we shall soon have occasion to notice, to an acknowledged instance (as he contends) of such a change, where the evidences of transition make at least equal approaches to invisibility. So far, then, every thing is most adverse to the first reason advanced by the learned lecturer in support of his opinion.

Let us now endeavour to ascertain in what manner "the emphatic asseveration," *Verily, verily*, is really employed by our Lord in his discourses. In his conversation with Nicodemus (John iii. 2—11), his replies to that "master of Israel" are regularly introduced by the address, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee."...On the occasion of healing the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda, our Lord thus began and continued his discourse :

"Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.... He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." John v. 19—25.

The foregoing passage most happily illustrates the mode in which our Lord, as he proceeds in his discourse, still opens new views upon the intellectual perceptions of his hearers. There is no appearance of "summary and epilogue" with "the emphatic asseveration prefixed." On the contrary, the reader cannot fail to observe that the transitions are regularly effected by means of the awakening address, "Verily, verily, I say unto you."... Not less illustrative of our Lord's use of the same phrase, are the following texts, which I strongly

recommend to attention : viz. John x. 1—7 ; xiv. 11, 12 ; xvi. 19—23.\* Even this very sixth chapter of St John affords clear indications that the phrase is usually employed, not as the means of deducing consequences, but of presenting additional truths. In the 26th verse, our Lord thus commences his discourse : “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.” When the Jews afterwards taunted him with the manna given (daily, I suppose they meant) from heaven, by Moses, “ Then (v. 32) Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you

\* I here transcribe the passages.

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth ; and the sheep hear his voice : and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.... Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.” John x. 1—7.

“ Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me : or else believe me for the very works’ sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also.” xiv. 11, 12.

“ Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me ; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me ? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice : and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy..... And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.” xvi. 19—23.



not that bread from heaven ; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." So likewise is our Lord's discourse continued, in the verses under review (vv. 47, 48, &c.): " Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die."... All therefore that we have observed in the course of our enquiry—and it is but little, compared with what might have been adduced—leads to the inference, that "the emphatic asseveration," *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, instead of being employed in summing up and terminating what has preceded, is made use of as the means of inculcating new considerations; and of resuming, expanding and enforcing doctrines antecedently laid down. We are thus compelled to decide that Dr Wiseman's scheme, of drawing a line of separation between the 47th verse and the 48th verse, is overthrown by the general analogy of other passages, as well as by the manifest import of the whole context.

There is something odd in Dr Wiseman's next mode of reasoning; which appears to be of this kind:—Reckoning from verse 35 on the one hand, and from *somewhere about verse 48* on the other, we find a great change of thought and expression: it is usual, in our Lord's discourses, to originate *different* trains of sentiment from the *same* ex-



pression: verses 35 and 48 contain the same expression—"I am the bread of life:"—therefore verse 48 is the commencement of the change of thought which is so apparent. Such I conceive to be the reasoning in the following extract:

"But these words [*I am the bread of life*] are exactly the same as open the first part of our Saviour's lecture, at v. 35. Now, I find it an ordinary form of transition with him, when he applies the same images to different purposes, to repeat the very words by which he originally commenced his discourse. I will give two or three instances. In John x. 11, he says, 'I am the good shepherd;' and he then expatiates upon this character, *as it regards himself*, contrasting himself with the hireling, and expressing himself ready to die for his sheep. At v. 14, he repeats the words once more, 'I am the good shepherd;' and explains them *with reference to the sheep*, how they hear and obey him, and how his flock will be increased. Again, John xv. 1, he commences his discourse by 'I am the true vine;' and applies the figure *negatively* to the consequences of *not* being united to him. Then at v. 5, he repeats the same words, and explains them *positively* of the fruits produced by those who *do* abide in him. Exactly in the same manner, in our passage, our Saviour having spoken of himself as bread, 'I am the living bread,' and expatiated on this thought, in respect to his being the spiritual nourishment of the soul by faith, makes the same form of transition, to treat of himself as *bread* in another sense, in as much as his flesh is our real sustenance." (p. 41—43.)

The instances thus adduced by Dr Wiseman, even if correctly explained, could only be admitted as answers to *objections* founded on the improbability of different trains of sentiment being deduced from the same primary thought. They could afford no *direct proof* that such a mode of

instruction has been adopted in the sixth chapter of St John. Let, however, the passages referred to be produced and examined; and in the first place, John x. 11—16:

“11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep....14. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”

The 11th and the 14th of the preceding verses commence with the affirmation, “I am the good shepherd.” This character, according to Dr Wiseman, is explained, in vv. 11—13, *with regard to our Lord himself*; and from v. 14 to the end, *with reference to the sheep*: in other words, there is, at the 14th verse, a transition from one object to another. Now it appears to me, as I have no doubt it will to the reader, that the *regard to our Lord himself*, as distinguished from *reference to the sheep*, is far more conspicuous *after* the 14th verse, than in the preceding verses. In the former section, after our Saviour had avowed himself to be “the good shepherd,” giving “his life for the sheep,” he immediately proceeded to describe the hireling: in the latter, he *dwells* upon

himself—"I am the good shepherd"—"I know my sheep"—"I know the Father"—"I lay down my life for the sheep"—"Other sheep I have—them also I must bring." In fact, it is more especially in the latter section that he *contrasts himself* with the hireling, and insists upon his own perfect knowledge of his sheep—his great care of them—and his resolution to secure their welfare, even by his death. This indeed must have been felt by the learned lecturer himself; when, to remove any such impression, he observed in a note (p. 42), that he considered the latter part of v. 15 (*and I lay down my life for the sheep*)—"as merely incidental and parenthetic." This truly seems to be a strange mode of dealing with Scripture. In the 11th verse, our Lord, after affirming that he was "the good shepherd," went on to say—"THE GOOD SHEPHERD GIVETH HIS LIFE for the sheep." In the 14th verse, he repeats, "I am the good shepherd;" and when we find him, very soon after, declaring, "I LAY DOWN MY LIFE for the sheep"—can this be for any other purpose than that of impressing, still more deeply upon the minds of his hearers, the great truth which he had just before announced? Not a single reader, I am well persuaded, will endure the idea that a sentiment so momentous in itself, and so connected with the entire passage, should be considered "as merely incidental and parenthetic." When I see such notions as these seriously ad-

vanced, as reasons by which we are to decide on controverted doctrines, I am thrown into a state of perplexity. I involuntarily begin to muse on the motives which impel men to action, and the principles by which their conduct is directed. Here is misrepresentation, obvious to a child, with regard to a passage which must have been read with some attention. Did the misrepresentation arise from inadvertency, or from design? I know not. Happy, at all events, is the man, whose cause needs not the support of the kind of criticism here employed by Dr Wiseman...Without farther remark, let us now proceed to the other instance cited by the learned author. It is that of John xv. 1—8.

“1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. 3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. 6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

In commenting on the foregoing passage, Dr Wiseman affirms that, from v. 1 to v. 4 inclusive,



“the consequences of *not* being united to” Christ are unfolded. . If so, how did the learned author interpret the latter clause of v. 2—“Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit”? He also affirms that “the fruits produced by those who *do* abide in” Christ are dwelt upon, from v. 5 to the end. If so, how did he interpret v. 6—“If a man abide NOT in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered”? In short, a more visionary distinction was never devised, by imagination uncontrolled by judgment, than that which has been made by Dr Wiseman, with respect to the first and second portions of John xv. 1—8. In this case however, as well as in that which was last discussed, Dr Wiseman has recourse to the hypothesis of the existence of “merely incidental and parenthetic” matter. His conjecture, in the note p. 42, is, that the latter part of v. 5 ought to be connected with the sixth verse; and thus form that portion, which he is pleased to deem “incidental and parenthetic.” The passage, according to this plan, will assume the following appearance :

“I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit ...[For, or because, without me ye can do nothing, if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered]...If ye abide in me, &c.”

In Dr Wiseman’s opinion, “the reasoning,” if the ordinary punctuation be adopted, “seems hardly



conclusive"—‘He that abideth in me—bringeth forth *much* fruit, because without me, ye can do *nothing*.’ The reasoning is of this kind—“He that abideth in me—bringeth forth much fruit—*and only in that case*—for without me ye can do nothing”.....and such reasoning I should, for my own part, be reluctant to deem “hardly conclusive,” from the mouth of Him who “spake as one having authority.” But what is to be said of the reasoning which distinguishes the sentence proposed by Dr Wiseman? “Because without me ye can do nothing, if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered.” Could the learned author have really persuaded himself that, by such a change, he had amended the reasoning of the passage as usually read? In all the editions and versions which I have consulted—and I have referred to several—the ordinary punctuation is preserved. The Spanish Version of Cypriano de Valera gives the clause—“for without me ye can do nothing”—in a parenthesis. Even the Latin Vulgate—the Authentic Bible of the Roman Catholic Church—and the Douay or Rhemish Version, are opposed to Dr Wiseman. But this is not all. According to the received punctuation, we have a striking antithesis between the sixth and seventh verses:—v. 6. “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth, &c. ;” v. 7. “If ye abide in me—ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

Now allow Dr Wiseman to attach the words, "For without me ye can do nothing," to the sixth verse—and the antithesis, which our Lord manifestly *designed*, is utterly lost. Still farther: The statement of a fact, with the reason *subjoined*—as in the case under review—is eminently characteristic of St John's style: Thus, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me;"—"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace: for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;"—"He that believeth not is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God;" and so on. Passages of this kind, in the Gospel, the first Epistle and the Apocalypse, are too numerous, not merely for citation, but for reference. The instances, in which the reason *precedes* the statement—in conformity with Dr Wiseman's construction—seldom occur in the writings of the same Apostle; and where they do occur, assume a character from which that construction can derive no countenance. Thus we read: "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou"—or "thou believest;"—"Because I live, ye shall live also;"—"Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not;"—"Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In these cases, and in the few others which might be adduced, (John xvi. 6;

xx. 29 ; Apoc. iii. 10) the reason is given and then the fact ; without any intermediate condition whatever. The consequence is that, when Dr Wiseman required us to believe that the Apostle wrote in the following manner—"Because without me ye can do nothing, if a man abide not in me, he is cast forth"—he certainly should have presented us with at least one instance, of a similar construction, from the same source. These arguments are most assuredly sufficient to show the futility of the proposed change of punctuation. To say the truth, there is not a single principle, that ought to guide us in enquiries of this nature, which is not directly opposed to its adoption. Although, as Dr Wiseman has admonished us, "we owe our present division [of the New Testament] into verses to the elder Stephanus, who made it, for his relaxation *inter equitandum*," the learned printer certainly executed his work better than Dr Wiseman would have done, if we may judge from these specimens. I may finally observe, on the subject of John xv. 1—8, that 'A new version of the Gospels,' (1836) by a Roman Catholic, who is one of the learned author's admirers, retains the common punctuation; and that, in Bowyer's Critical Conjectures—a work in which almost every change of punctuation is attempted, which the most perverse ingenuity can suggest—the change proposed by Dr Wiseman is not found. There is, indeed, a change proposed in Bowyer's volume ; and it seems to have

been thought of by Lampe:—"I am the vine, ye are the branches: (he that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit:) for without me ye can do nothing." In this way, the change of person and number, in passing from the intermediate clause to the last, is avoided. This reading, at least, does not *create* difficulties, as Dr Wiseman's does. We conclude, therefore, that Dr Wiseman's appeal to the 15th chapter is equally ineffectual, with the appeal to the 10th, in supporting his proposed division of the 6th chapter of St John...I now proceed to the learned author's third and main reason for fixing upon the 48th verse of that chapter, as the beginning of a new subject. His reason is thus stated:

"The motive which principally induces me to see a clear separation between v. 47 and v. 48, and which forbids me to allow any other separation or break in the discourse, till its complete interruption at v. 53, is the connexion of the entire passage in what is known by the name of the *poetical parallelism*. This is not the place to enter into an explanation of this system; for that I must refer you to Dr Jebb's interesting work upon the subject ('Sacred Literature').....Now nothing to me can be more striking than the regular arrangement of this discourse from v. 48 to v. 52 inclusively; and whoever understands the principle, and is accustomed to its application, will immediately, upon inspecting the passage as I have transcribed it, acknowledge that it stands wholly detached from what precedes down to v. 47, and that no transition can be allowed at any point but that. The following is the whole section of our Saviour's discourse, versicularly arranged.



- (a) 'I am the bread of life.
  - (b) Your fathers did eat manna in the desert
  - (c) And are dead.
- 
- (a) This is the bread
  - (b) Descending from heaven (such)
  - (c) That if any one eat of it he may not die.
- 
- (a) I am the living bread
  - (b) Which came down from heaven
  - (c) If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.

And the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.\*

"You cannot avoid remarking the nice balance of these lines. All those marked (a) contain the same ideas of *bread* and generally of *life*; the second ones (b) speak of the descent of this bread from heaven, contrasted with the manna; the third (c) impress its worth in the same comparative view. The last clause sums up and embodies the substance of the preceding. That repetition of the same idea and phrase, which at first sight seems superfluous in this passage, entirely vanishes upon viewing this arrangement; and there is a beautiful progression of sentiment, which gives a value to every repetition. Not to detain you with too many remarks, I will only instance the progressive character of the lines marked (c). The first speaks of the want of an immortalizing quality in the manna; the second attributes such a quality to the manna of the new Covenant, but in negative terms 'that if any one eat of it, he *may not die*,' the third expresses the same sentiment in a positive and energetic form, 'If any man eat of this bread, he *shall live for ever*.'" (pp. 43—45.)

Now in the first place, for the sake of students in divinity, I wish to enter my protest against the attempt to interpret the New Testament, by the

\* I have omitted the corresponding arrangement of the Greek, not conceiving it of any importance.



arbitrary application of “versicular arrangements” so fanciful as these. In the passage under review, it is assumed—without the slightest regard to proof or probability—that parallelisms were there intended. I object to the supposition altogether; but I will nevertheless proceed to examine Dr Wiseman’s scheme. Hebrew poetry then, so far as we are here concerned with the subject, is composed of periods or stanzas; each period or stanza comprising the same number of lines or sentences; and each line or sentence, in one period or stanza, bearing some relation to the corresponding line or sentence, in another period or stanza. This kind of *parallelism* has been supposed to exist in various parts of the New Testament. A single instance will explain the whole matter. The following passage, from our Lord’s sermon on the mount, is given, as arranged by Bishop Jebb :

“Ask, and it shall be given unto you ;

Seek, and ye shall find ;

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you :

For every one who asketh, receiveth ;

And every one who seeketh, findeth ;

And to every one who knocketh, it shall be opened.”

Matt. vii. 7, 8\*.

Here we find each line containing a distinct sentence; and the first, second and third lines in

\* ‘Sacred Literature,’ p. 156, ed. 1831. Let me here state distinctly that I have only attempted to explain that part, of the doctrine of parallelisms, which was required for the occasion.

each *period* respectively parallel to the first, second and third lines in the other. Let us now consider Dr Wiseman's arrangement of the passage in John vi. The first period contains three lines, and each line a distinct sentence—

“I am the bread of life.

Your fathers did eat manna in the desert

And are dead”—

and therefore the parallelism just described requires that each subsequent period should also comprise three lines, and each line a distinct sentence. I give the second period as I find it:

“This is the bread

Descending from heaven (such)

That if any one eat of it he may not die.”

And the fact is, that neither the first nor the second line, of this period, contains a distinct sentence. It is besides as clear as any thing of the sort can be that, unless the learned author had made up his mind that a parallel period should be constructed at all events, he must have seen that the first and second lines of the second period ought to form one line; by which means there would have been a real parallel between

“I am the bread of life”—

and

“This is the bread descending from heaven”

But then, the period would want a line; which, I suppose, he was unable to supply. The same

remarks are applicable to the third period; and I may yet observe, that the structure of the third line, of the first period, is as unlike as possible to that of the third line, as well in the second period, as the third:

“And are dead.”

“That if any one eat of it he may not die.”

“If any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.”

Such is Dr Wiseman's attempt to apply the doctrine of Hebrew parallelisms to the passage of St John—such “the nice balance of the lines,” of which he made his boast. I have no scruple in asserting that a much better distribution of his materials might easily have been made; but even then, it would have been manifest to any one, who really perceives the characteristic marks of such parallelism where they do exist, that the passage in question, as limited by himself, is quite unsusceptible of them....Dr Wiseman's principal argument, in favour of drawing a line of separation between the 47th and the 48th verse, has now been examined. The scheme was ingenious; and if the parallelism had been striking, would have appeared to possess a degree of importance, to which it would have been by no means entitled. The fact however happens to be, that, of all the instances of parallelism which have been imagined to exist in the New Testament, this proposed by Dr Wiseman is, so far as my knowledge extends, beyond expression the most wretched.

Although the learned author believes that the foregoing argument removes an objection—"that it is doing a violence to our Saviour's discourse, to suppose that he passes from one subject to another where there is nothing to indicate such a transition\*"—he next adduces, what he denominates, "a perfectly parallel instance of such a transition," from the 24th chapter of St Matthew's Gospel. In that chapter then, in which our Lord *commences* his prophetic discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem, we are to find an instance of transition without any indication of its having taken place. The design, when committed to writing, strikes one as so utterly absurd, that the question forces itself upon the mind—"How *could* a man of learning engage in such a project?" Dr Wiseman, however, thus discusses the matter:

"It is acknowledged that the concluding portion [of our Lord's discourse] is referable only to the final judgment; now where does the transition between the two occur? Why, some of the best commentators, as Kuinoel and after him Bloomfield, place it at the forty-third verse of the twenty-fourth chapter. Now if you read that passage attentively, you will be struck with the similarity of this transition to the one I have laid down for the sixth chapter of St John. In the preceding verse (42) our Lord sums up the substance of the foregoing instruction, just as he does in John vi. 47. 'Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not at what hour your Lord will come.' 'Amen, amen, I say unto you, He that believeth in me hath everlasting life.' He then resumes apparently the same figure drawn from the necessity of watching a house, as he does that of bread in our case;

\* Lectures, p. 45.



but then the conclusion of the discourse points out, that the 'coming of the Son of man' now mentioned (v. 44) is no longer the moral and invisible one spoken of in the preceding section (vv. 30, 37), but a real and substantial advent in the body (xxv. 31)." (pp. 45—47.)

Now when we consider the acknowledged difficulty respecting the interpretation of the 24th and 25th chapters of St Matthew's Gospel, the first impression, arising from the proposed comparison, is—that we are engaging in an attempt to extract light from obscurity. On another account, indeed, the reference to the chapters of St Matthew is fortunate; for those chapters involve not, if I rightly recollect, any points in dispute between Roman Catholics and Protestants. But be all this as it may, there is a fact to be stated, in the outset of these remarks, which does not augur well for the cause which Dr Wiseman has here in hand. Estius, a commentator of great name in the Roman Church—instead of believing, with the learned lecturer, that the transition, from the destruction of Jerusalem to the tribulation of the last day, takes place at the end of the 42d verse—holds that the said transition takes place at the 29th verse, or sooner\*. Moreover, this dif-

\* Estius, on Matt. xxiv. 29, thus writes: "Notandum totum hunc sermonem Christi esse propheticum, ideoque non mirandum si multum habeat obscuritatis, et subito transeat ab uno ad aliud remotius et principalius; quod frequens est in Prophetis. Ita Christus hic, vel in parte præcedenti, transitum facit a tribulatione Judaicæ gentis ad tribulationem universalium gentium per totum mundum futuram in fine sæculi."



ference of opinion, between Estius and himself, will perhaps be admitted as some excuse for those Protestant commentators who do not happen to agree in their views of the same point. But to proceed: In the last extract from the Lectures, we find the learned author asserting, that "some of the best commentators"—meaning, as he elsewhere informs us, "exclusively Protestant commentators"—place the point of separation "at the 43d verse." In his Discourses, he adopts still stronger language. "All the most accurate commentators," he there says, "place the point of separation at the 43d verse of the 24th chapter;" and after reciting the 42d and 43d verses, he adds; "You perceive no transition between these verses, and yet these commentators place the transition exactly in the middle of them\*." Now, in order that the reader may clearly understand what is going on, I here affirm, in direct opposition to Dr Wiseman, that those very commentators (with the exceptions which will be specified) have placed the point of separation immediately after the 41st verse—and *not* after the 42nd. The validity or invalidity of the reference to St Matthew, as the learned author is well aware, entirely depends upon *the fact*, whatever it may be, respecting those commentators. Let therefore the fact be ascertained.

\* Discourses, Vol. II. p. 143.

Bengelius—a man whose labours on the Greek Testament have secured for him that respect to which he is so justly entitled—divided the text of his edition (1734) into *paragraphs*, corresponding to the matters successively treated of. His paragraphs were formed with great care and deliberation; and his arrangement of them may in any case be appealed to, as that of a most learned, intelligent and impartial critic. In the edition of Bengelius, then, the passage under consideration assumes the following shape:

“38. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noë entered into the ark, 39. And knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41. Then two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43. But know this, that if the good-man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”

Here we have *the break* immediately after the 41st verse; and on a diligent examination of editions of the Greek Testament, in which paragraphs are given, the break is either there, or not till several verses afterwards. An edition, with the separation after the 42d verse, would be no common curiosity in its way.

If we turn to versions, we find 'Tyndale's—which appeared in 1526—divided into chapters and paragraphs. In his version, the division takes place immediately after the 41st verse; the 42d being the commencement of a new paragraph. So also in the authorized English Bible of 1611, a new paragraph is marked at the 42d verse. The authorized version, as given in a recent American edition in which particular attention has been paid to the paragraphs, presents the portion, from v. 32 to v. 51, the end of the chapter, without interruption. The 42d verse begins a paragraph in the versions of Dr Daniel Scott, Archbishop Newcome, Dr Campbell and Mr Wakefield....The Mons (French) version, from the Latin Vulgate, exhibits the whole passage, from v. 36 to v. 44 inclusive, under one head, thus distinguished—*Dernier jour imprevu. L'un pris, l'autre laissé. Veiller à toute heure*; in which title, *Veiller à toute heure* corresponds exactly to v. 42, *Watch therefore*—and so, points out that verse as the beginning of the last subdivision. In like manner, Beausobre makes his paragraph extend from v. 36 to v. 44; with *the same* indications of subdivisions which distinguish the Mons version. The Spanish version of Cypriano de Valera presents a new paragraph, commencing with the 42d verse. The Italian version of Diodati has no distinction of paragraphs. But not to dwell upon translations by men of other times, whether long or

recently past—let us examine the new Roman Catholic version of the four Gospels, to which I have before referred. We there find, contrary to Dr Wiseman's doctrine, the 24th chapter with this heading, *THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM*; and the 25th with this, *THE TEN VIRGINS, TEN TALENTS, AND LAST JUDGMENT*. Moreover, so far is the translator from making any break after the 42d verse, that he forms the whole portion from v. 29 to v. 44 into one continuous paragraph. To search farther amongst versions would only be to overwhelm Dr Wiseman with misfortunes. In short, a version of established credit, or indeed of no credit at all, exhibiting the 43d verse as the beginning of a new paragraph, would be as great a curiosity as an edition of the Greek with the same peculiarity\*.

The verses now under consideration are these: "42. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up." Let these verses be read with any thing like attention to the sentiment, and the truth of Dr Wiseman's opinion—that we can

\* I may take this opportunity to state that the new Roman Catholic version offers no division at John vi. 47. The 48th verse is there in the midst of a paragraph, which runs on to the end of the 58th verse. Dr Wiseman is not happy in these conjectures.



“perceive no transition [from one subject to another] between them”—will be at once admitted. We cannot, therefore, but feel that editors and translators would have acted strangely, if they had separated them from each other. Editors, indeed, and translators have presented the verses in the connexion which naturally belongs to them; and it is beforehand not very credible, that Commentators should have put asunder what so many reasons conspire to join together. As an indication of what the reader may expect in this matter, I will lay before him the observations of Dr Doddridge, a man of learning and discernment, in relation to the point at issue. In his *Family Expositor*, he thus writes: “After this paragraph [containing verses 40 and 41] there is not a word peculiar to the destruction of Jerusalem; but many circumstances are introduced, which refer to the day of judgment (and of death, as transmitting to it) and which can only be thus understood. I therefore humbly conceive, that the grand transition, about which commentators are so much divided and so generally mistaken, is made precisely after these two verses.” By Dr Doddridge, then, the connexion between the 42d and 43d verses is clearly maintained. Here, however, is one mistake to be guarded against. Dr Doddridge, when writing of the transition from one subject to another, “about which commentators are so much divided,” did not refer to any difficulty of choice



between the 41st and the 42d verse—but to the difficulties which had been experienced, when the whole discourse was taken into account; the transition having been assigned to an earlier, or a considerably later part, of the discourse. It was, however, “precisely after” the 41st verse, that Dr Doddridge fixed the point of transition.

Philological notes seldom afford much information respecting the various bearings of the course of thought; and large commentaries may be ransacked in vain, for the relations and dependencies existing between portions of text at all larger than a word or a phrase. The consequence is, that few of the older commentators afford any information respecting the connexion of the verses which form the subject of enquiry. Let me declare, however, that in no commentators, of whatever age (with the exceptions hereafter specified) have I discovered the slightest traces of a belief, that the 43d verse is the commencement of a new paragraph and a new subject. On the contrary, I can state that, amongst other commentators, the following—namely, Grotius\*, Clark (Bible 1690), Burkitt, Wells, Bishop Wilson, Bishop Pearce, Gill, Guyse, Bishop Porteus, Gilpin, Scott, Adam Clarke and Fritzche—distinctly recognize a new

\* I will transcribe Grotius's note; from which it will be seen that he takes vv. 42—44 *together*. “42. Γρηγορεῖτε οὖν. Hæc omnibus Christianis dicuntur. Illud autem quod sequitur com-mate 45, generalem admonitionem peculiariter Apostolis aliisque Ecclesiæ Pastoribus accommodat; quod nos docet Luc. xii. 41.

paragraph commencing with verse 42. So much for Dr Wiseman's declaration—that "all the most accurate commentators place the point of separation at the 43d verse of the 24th chapter."

But in proof of the truth of his assertion, the learned author appeals to Kuinoel, Rosenmüller and Bloomfield; and his appeal shall be heard. The only observation, I would previously make, is this—that, after considering the natural connexion between the 42d and the 43d verse, and the agreement amongst editors, translators and commentators, in retaining that connexion, we can scarcely conceive how any one, while simply interpreting the passage as it lies before him, can possibly sever the one from the other. Nothing, we seem to feel, but some extraneous influence, whatever it may be, is sufficient to account for so strange a proceeding. When therefore we are informed by Dr Wiseman—and find the information correct—that Kuinoel deemed the 43d verse the commencement of a new paragraph on a new subject, we cannot but be anxious to know the reasons which determined the judgment of that learned commentator\*. In his note, then, he refers to Luke xii. 35 as a parallel place; and there finding

\* We collect Kuinoel's opinion from these words: "*Ea quæ inde a v. 43. usque ad c. xxv. 31. leguntur, a pluribus quidem interpretibus, non minus quam ea quæ præcesserunt, ad interitum civitatis reipublicæque Judæorum referuntur; sed rectius, ut opinor, explicantur de adventu Christi ultimo, et præmiis pœnisque in alterâ vitâ expectandis.*"

some verses similar in sentiment, and others nearly identical in expression, to those of St Matthew, he concludes that the passage of St Matthew is to be interpreted by that of St Luke, which happens to be the fuller\*. On this proceeding I remark: 1. That in one very material particular the two passages are *not* parallel—for the discourses, of which they are parts, were delivered on totally different occasions;—2. That, although our Lord frequently inculcated the same sentiments, we are not warranted in supposing that he always stated them with equal minuteness;—and 3. That the passage of St Luke does of itself so decidedly tend to connect the 42d verse with that which follows, that there is some difficulty in supposing Kuinoel not to have really meant the 42d verse, when he wrote the 43d.

## MATTHEW, XXIV.

42. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43. But know this, that if the good-man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

\* Kuinoel writes: "1. Lucæ locus parallelus xii. 35 sqq. agit de felicitate futurâ in regno Messiano piis Christianis exspectandâ.... 2. Hic ipse Lucæ locus docet Matthæum more suo, etiam hoc loco cum specimen dare vellet sermonum Christi de rēditu ipsius ad excidium Hierosolymorum, atque de reversione ejusdem ad judicium extremum, *varias omisisse interlocutiones et interrogationes discipulorum*, quas Jesus v. 43. ss. respexit."

## LUKE, XII.

35. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning.

36. And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding; and that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39. And this know, that if the good-man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

The reader is now enabled to decide the point, from a comparison of the passages themselves; and certainly, if any thing were needed to show how firmly the 42d verse in St Matthew is bound to the 43d and 44th, the quotation from St Luke would supply it. In St Luke, vv. 35—38 are manifestly introductory to the 39th and 40th; and so in St Matthew, v. 42, which exhibits the purport of Luke xii. 35—38 in a compressed form, leads as clearly to vv. 43, 44; which contain the concluding verses of St Luke almost without a change of expression...Kuinoel moreover proceeds to state in his note, that, in St Matthew's narrative, various



interlocutions and interrogatories on the part of the disciples, to which v. 43 had respect, are omitted. With regard to this view of the subject, I here, after attentively examining the point, venture to pronounce Kuinoel's conjecture to be the result of as strange an hallucination as ever took possession of any man's mind.

We have now ascertained the grounds on which Kuinoel has thought proper to dislocate the passage of St Matthew; and I feel content that the reader should judge of their validity. I might, therefore, immediately proceed to the case of Rosenmüller, next adduced by Dr Wiseman; but my love of truth compels me previously to mention the only instances I am aware of, in which somewhat of a similar attempt has been made, to tamper with the same passage.

A person engaged in carrying an extended system into effect is seldom scrupulous about the means employed. The truth of this remark might be copiously exemplified in Harmonies of the Gospels; in which the connected train of thought in an individual Evangelist is too often sacrificed to the general plan....Le Clerc's Harmony is well known. The author found it convenient to insert the 42d verse of Matt. xxiv. between the 36th and 37th verses; and there accordingly the verse is placed. The bearing of the verse upon what followed was considered as nothing....Again, Whitby, finding vv. 43, 44 recorded, in nearly the same

words, by St Luke (xii. 39, 40) as spoken by our Lord *on another occasion*, seems to suppose, with Lightfoot, that St Matthew added them, not because they had been again spoken, but because they well agreed with the general intention of the discourse. Of such conjectures, by whomsoever sanctioned, I should condemn myself if I were to write otherwise than in the strongest terms of disapprobation\*.... From these instances, which are all that have occurred to me, I conclude that external causes must have been in operation, apart from the study of our Lord's discourse as related by St Matthew, whenever we discover a disposition to separate the 43d verse from the 42d.

I now go on to examine the case of Rosenmüller, to whose notions Dr Wiseman appears to have paid great attention; for, after referring to Bloomfield's *Recensio Synoptica Annotationis Sacræ*, we find him thus writing:

"Rosenmüller, whom Bloomfield quotes as coinciding in opinion with Kuinoel, differs essentially from him. His words are, 'Equidem omnia, quæ a cap. xxiv. 42, usque ad c. xxv. 30, dicuntur, ad *utrumque* Christi adventum referenda puto.' (D. Jo. Geor. Rosenmülleri Scholia in N.T. Ed. 6ta Norimb.

\* This is Whitby's note. Matt. xxiv. 42, 44. "Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὑμεῖς γίνεσθε ἑτοιμοί. *Watch therefore, v. 42. Therefore be ye also ready.* It is probably conjectured by Dr Lightfoot, that the discourse of Christ upon this subject ended at v. 42 or 44, as in St Mark and St Luke it seems to do; and that the words following, were, as St Luke places them (xii. 39), spoken at another time, and upon another occasion: but, because they well accord also with this place and this occasion, and do there, as well as here, follow the exhortation given, v. 43, St Matthew hath added them to this chapter."

1815. vol. I. p. 495), so that he considers this portion of the discourse as intermediate and common to both the others." (p. 46 note.)

It is undoubtedly true that Rosenmüller, in the place here referred to—which, I would observe, is the introduction to the 25th chapter—interprets the portion contained between xxiv. 42 and xxv. 30, of the double advent; and yet the author of the *Recensio Synoptica* may say this for himself—namely, that at Matthew xxiv. 42, where he naturally expected to find Rosenmüller's opinion, the preference seems to be given to the notion that the portion in question relates to the general judgment\*.... There is however another mistake, which, as Dr Wiseman had undertaken the office of corrector, he would have done well to rectify. When Rosenmüller mentions the portion between c. xxiv. 42 and c. xxv. 30 or 31 as belonging to the double advent, where exactly did the learned lecturer understand the point of reckoning to commence—at the 42d verse, or at the 43d verse? The fact, which indeed seems too obvious to escape any one, is this—that Rosenmüller's expression in the introduction to the 25th chapter, and his note attached to Matt. xxiv. 42, show beyond all controversy that he agrees with the great body of commentators in fixing the change at *the beginning* of the 42d verse. It is singular that

\* His words at v. 42 are, "Videntur hæc, quæ sequuntur usque ad c. xxv. 31, spectare ad reditum Christi ad judicium extremum, vel ad utrumque ejus reditum."



Dr Wiseman, with all his acuteness, should have failed to perceive so glaring a discrepancy between Rosenmüller's opinion and his own.

Dr Wiseman lastly mentions the author of the *Recensio Synoptica*, as supposing the transition to take place at the 43d verse. Now, I conclude that Dr Bloomfield was not considering, when he wrote the note in that work, *the exact* point of transition; for he not only quotes Kuinoel and Rosenmüller, as agreeing in opinion on the subject, when in fact they do not so agree, but afterwards transcribes the manifestly different sentiments of Doddridge (already given p. 37) in confirmation of the same views. To this conclusion I the more strictly adhere, because I find, in his Greek Testament subsequently published, the following note on Matthew xxiv. 42: "Some of the best commentators ancient and modern are agreed that our Lord's discourse on the destruction of Jerusalem terminates at v. 41, and that what follows, being so peculiarly applicable to the *final* advent of our Lord, forms, as it were, the *moral* of the prophecy, and its practical application to his disciples of every age."...And thus, the author of the *Recensio* is directly at variance with the learned lecturer; whose appeal to commentators in this case is, I really think, one of the most unfortunate on record.

To declare, without reserve, my decided opinion of that portion of the Lecture which relates to



Kuinoel, Rosenmüller and Bloomfield—I must say, that I have seldom found so large a mass of error compressed into so small a space. No ordinary power must have been at work for such an achievement.

Dr Wiseman having detailed his reasons, which have now been reviewed, for the proposed division of the sixth chapter of St John, finally exults in them, as “the grounds which not merely authorize, but convincingly oblige us to suppose a transition to a new section of our Lord’s discourse, at the forty-eighth verse.” Those reasons, to enable the reader to see them at one view, are: 1. The use of “the emphatic asseveration,” *Verily, verily*, assumed by Dr Wiseman to be an indication of a closing remark; but distinctly shown in some of the foregoing pages (15—17) to have been generally employed by our Lord in the commencement and continuation of his discourses;—2. The occasional repetition of the *same* words in our Lord’s discourses—for example, *I am the bread of life*—considered by Dr Wiseman as the means of enforcing *different* sentiments; which I have, from his own instances, shown (pp. 17—26) to be the usual means of farther illustrating and expanding the *same* sentiments;—3. A scheme of parallelism, applied to John vi. 48—51; which parallelism turns out (pp. 26—30) to be altogether destructive to Dr Wiseman’s assumed division of the discourse;—and 4. An appeal to the 24th chapter of St Mat-

thew; which, while it attests the extreme inaccuracy of Dr Wiseman's representations, establishes anything rather than that which it was meant to establish. The truth, indeed, is, that the arguments employed, in this first Lecture, do not merely fail in making out the points for which they were advanced, but positively prove the directly contrary points. Let me state, in conclusion, that the attempt to give credibility to the notion of a transition in our Lord's discourse, at the 48th verse of the 6th chapter of St John, is unsuccessful in the extreme; and that every legitimate principle of interpretation requires us to bring the 47th verse into close connexion with the verses in immediate succession.

It seems worthy of remark, that Dr Wiseman, although, in the case of St Matthew, willing enough to avail himself of "the best commentators," has not mentioned a single commentator, of any age, as agreeing with him in his proposed division, of our Lord's discourse in John vi, after v. 47. Kuinoel, the learned author's friend in the case of the 24th chapter of St Matthew, evidently conceives the discourse in St John to have been *resumed* at v. 47; and on that principle collects vv. 47—50 into one section. Let me also observe that an edition of the original, or a version, or a commentary, showing that Dr Wiseman's division of the discourse, after v. 47, had been anticipated, would be a greater curiosity than can well be imagined.

The reader will find, in the course of the next section, that Dr Wiseman's argument, founded on his proposed division of the 6th chapter of St John, is remarkably ingenious; and may fairly warrant great anxiety and corresponding pains, on the part of the learned author, to ensure its reception in the world. This consideration, as I have already stated, must be my excuse, for attempting so minute an examination, as the preceding pages exhibit, of the reasons brought forward in defence of that division. "If it shall be shown," the learned author fairly writes, "that the portion of the discourse comprised between the forty-eighth and fifty-second verses is a complete section of itself, we shall not unreasonably conclude that a new subject may likewise be therein treated." If, then, nothing of this has been shown, "we shall not unreasonably conclude" that the same subject, whatever it may be, is continued from the preceding portion of the discourse; and therefore, whenever Dr Wiseman deduces any consequences from this unwarrantable division, I shall take the liberty to intimate, that results drawn from unsubstantial premises can, in no case, be more than the shadow of a shade.

Another motive, I repeat, for such an examination, is derived from the importance of ascertaining by examples, at the very outset of the enquiry, the kind of reliance which is to be placed upon the statements subsequently presented to



our attention. Ample scope has been afforded for the purpose; and I cannot but think that the investigation has furnished excellent materials for forming a sound judgment on the subject.

From some passages, even in this first lecture, I infer that Dr Wiseman has a powerful imagination; and that he is fond of clothing its suggestions in magnificent language. I will illustrate my meaning by an instance, which is not without relation to the subject hereafter to be discussed. The day after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, described in the beginning of the sixth chapter of St John's Gospel, our Lord, on being at last discovered by the multitudes who had sought him, thus accosted them—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled:"—and this representation, of the sluggishness of their feelings and the grossness of their motives, is most completely borne out by their conduct during our Lord's address. Such were the actual circumstances of that discourse, which, according to the grand conceptions and lofty phrase of Dr Wiseman (p. 37), "opened amidst the wonder, the admiration, the reverence of multitudes!" Surely the learned writer must have been bewildered by the creations of his own genius; and so, having wandered far beyond the precincts of truth, began to entrance his readers with the splendours of fiction. That a more erroneous view, of the



general character of the multitude, cannot possibly be entertained, must be acknowledged by every one. Nor is the mistake of little consequence. "A kind and skilful teacher," Dr Wiseman informs us (p. 29), "will address himself very differently to friends or to enemies, to those who are hearkening in order to learn, or those who are listening only to find fault:"—and this is given as a rule which is to guide us in the process of interpretation. If then, in attempting to explain the instructions of such a teacher, we mistake the object of his hearers—attributing to them a desire "to learn" when their disposition is rather "to find fault"—how can we avoid misunderstanding the nature of his discourse? This mistake, as we shall have many opportunities of observing, runs through the first part of Dr Wiseman's lectures; and the conclusion seems inevitable, that, so far as he adheres to his own principles, his interpretation of the main portion of John vi. must be a tissue of error.

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## PART I. SECTION II.

CHANGE OF SUBJECT IN THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST JOHN.

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DR WISEMAN has devoted not less, I think, than sixteen pages, of the earlier part of his first lecture, to an account of those principles of *Hermeneutical Science*, by means of which the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist may, in his opinion, be deduced from the pages of Holy Writ. This preliminary statement of principles will assuredly seem very strange to all readers; and in those, who are not unacquainted with the arts of controversy, will probably raise doubts whether the system of interpretation, and the case to which it is applied, may not have been, by some ingenious contrivance, expressly adapted to each other. The fact however, which I have now mentioned, is not the most remarkable characteristic of the learned author's procedure, with respect to his hermeneutical schemes. With but little reference to the principles of interpretation employed, he had expatiated, through thirteen long discourses, on the doctrines and practices of the Church to which he belongs—satisfied, to all appearance, that his reasonings would of themselves be convincing to his hearers: but no sooner does he arrive at his

fourteenth discourse—which is *the first* on Transubstantiation—than he begins to explain, almost as formally as he had done to his divinity students, the grounds of Scriptural Interpretation, with a view to the subject then to be discussed. The motives avowed for adopting such a course, being curious and well entitled to notice, are here given :

“Before entering on the arguments from Holy Writ, regarding this point [Transubstantiation], it is important that I should lay down clearly before you, the principles which will guide me in the examination of Scriptural texts. I have had, on other occasions, opportunity to remark, how there is a vague and insufficient way of satisfying ourselves regarding the meaning of Scriptural texts:—that is to say, when, reading them over, and having in our minds a certain belief, we are sure to attach to them that meaning, which seems either absolutely to support it, or is, at least, reconcilable with it. It is in this way that many opposite opinions are by various sects equally held to be demonstrated in Scripture. Certainly there must be some key, or means of interpreting it more securely ; and on the occasion alluded to, when I had occasion to examine several passages of Scripture, I contented myself with laying down, as a general rule, that we should examine it by itself, and find the key in other and clearer passages, for the one under examination. But on the present occasion, it is necessary to enter more fully into an exposition of a few general and simple principles, which have their foundation in the philosophy of ordinary language, and in common sense, and which will be the principles that I shall seek to follow.” (Discourses, Vol. II. pp. 136, 137.)

On entering upon the consideration of Dr Wiseman’s Introductory Lecture, I determined, in the first instance, to disregard his array of *herme-*

*neutical principles*: for I had generally found such exhibitions, at the best, rather showy than useful; and had some reason to believe that they frequently tended to perplex and mislead, rather than to enlighten and direct. Besides, if they were founded in truth, I felt that I did not need them: if they were the result of artifice, I had no doubt of being able to detect their fallacy, by the mode in which they were applied. At the close of my review of the lecture, I certainly did not think that the specimens of interpretation, which had been examined, reflected any credit on the imposing apparatus by which they were announced.... Under such circumstances, the learned author's principles of interpretation would probably have passed without remark, had they not been forced upon my attention, by the paragraph just extracted from his fourteenth discourse. If, however, I am thus tempted to offer some observations upon the subject, I shall speedily resume my main purpose.

All who have been employed in tracking error to its source will approve the maxim of the Logicians, that, for the most part, *it lies hidden in universals*. The individual object indeed, to which the general affirmation is applied, will frequently lay bare the fallacy in its hiding place; yet greater caution is required, than is usually found, to avoid being misled by the plausibilities of theory. Hence the distrust with which well-



devised plans of interpretation, prefixed to particular treatises, ought to be viewed. But in addition to the suspicions called forth by Dr Wiseman's hermeneutical principles as such, the learned author has unconsciously afforded us the strongest reasons for believing that something peculiarly wrong pervades their entire substance. In the last extract, we find that, prior to the fourteenth discourse, he had been content to "examine Scripture by means of itself, and find the key in other and clearer passages;" but that, when engaging in defence of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, he no longer relied upon so obvious a mode of proceeding. On that occasion, he found it "necessary to enter more fully into an exposition of a few general and simple principles, which have their foundation in the philosophy of ordinary language, and in common sense." Can any thing, in the first place, be more manifest, than that the person, who thus deserts his original principles of interpretation, does so because he feels that the principles he relinquishes will not sustain the cause he has in hand? Can any thing, in the second place, be more certain, than that there is scarcely a principle of interpretation, however full of mistake and mischief, which may not, by dextrous management, be shown to "have its foundation" in such a nebulous substratum as "the philosophy of ordinary language." For my own part, I solemnly declare that if, in

reading any volume of science, or criticism, or literature or morals, I were to find the author so shifting his ground, in the process of enquiry, I should instantly throw away the book—with an indignant feeling, that the author is utterly unworthy of a moment's attention, from one whose aim is to ascertain the truth.

Waiving, for the present, all further animadversions on Dr Wiseman's general principles of interpretation, I shall now endeavour to explain one great object of his, in marking the 48th verse, of the 6th chapter of St John, as the introduction to an entirely new train of thought. This (probably) original notion of the learned writer is exceedingly ingenious; and although it would not, even if established, be so conclusive in his own favour as he imagined, could not fail to fix the attention of such an advocate in such a cause. On inspecting the aforesaid chapter, we find that, from v. 32 to v. 48, our Lord, after mentioning "the true bread from heaven"—"the bread of God," that "giveth life unto the world"—describes HIMSELF, in v. 35 and again in v. 48, as "the bread of life"—of which his faithful followers were to participate, and thereby "live for ever." When afterwards, in v. 51, he mentions, for the first time, his flesh, he makes a pointed reference to all that he had previously said of himself—by again declaring that he is the living bread—coming down from heaven—giving eternal life to those

who eat of it—adding that the bread was *his flesh*—which he would give “for the life of the world.” Hence, if by change of subject, in this chapter, he meant the transition, so carefully and gradually effected, from *the bread*, which he had been speaking of, to *his flesh*—that transition must be assigned to the 51st verse; and it really seems impossible, on any reasonable grounds, to believe that such transition is made at any other part of the discourse. Now, with this belief of a transition at the 51st verse, although held by Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, Dr Wiseman declares himself to be “not satisfied.” His persuasion is, that, in the earlier part of our Lord’s discourse, the language is to be understood in a metaphorical sense—and in the latter, in a strictly literal sense. He holds that *the bread*, mentioned in the former part, signifies our Lord’s *doctrine*; while *the flesh*, in the latter part, is real flesh, to be veritably eaten. He also maintains that, in the former part, *faith* is the internal principle by which the bread, or doctrine, is to be received; and that *love*, or *charity*, is the principle which accompanies the eating of the flesh, required in the latter part. Faith, then, having been laid down, by the learned author, as the principle peculiar to the former part of the discourse, and charity as that peculiar to the latter, where shall the line of division, between the two parts, be drawn? The learned author’s convenience will



be the most effectually consulted by drawing it after the 47th verse; for that is the verse in which faith is mentioned, for the last time, before our Lord adverts to *his flesh*. *There* consequently—as we have already seen, and as we might have predicted—he is confident that the division ought to be made. In the 47th verse, our Lord exclaims, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” If it be decided that this address forms, in Dr Wiseman’s language, “an appropriate close to a division of discourse”—“a manifest summary and epilogue of the preceding doctrine”—the principle of faith may thenceforth be considered to be dismissed; and some new principle, adapted to some new subject, unfolded and enlarged upon. But if the address be prospective as well as retrospective, greater dexterity will be required, than even Dr Wiseman can command, to show that faith is not the great principle still inculcated, through the remainder of the discourse. Common sense indeed, applied to the connexion of the passage, must have appeared, to the author himself, altogether adverse to his own hypothesis; yet arguments with an air of learning being frequently as efficacious in raising difficulties as in removing them, it might appear to be by no means a hopeless experiment to employ them in the instance under consideration. The result, however, is, that if the obvious bearing of the passage were not sufficient to discountenance



the purpose of severing the 47th verse from the verses following, the reasons alleged for the scheme, in the first lecture, combiné to prohibit, in the most peremptory manner, all attempts of the kind. And thus, in spite of the learned writer's most strenuous efforts to the contrary, the student of this portion of St John's Gospel is as much at liberty, as ever, to maintain, that the principle of faith, which pervades the former part of the chapter, extends from the 47th verse to the end.

Besides the change of internal principle, from faith to charity, several other advantages might be enumerated, which, in Dr Wiseman's estimation, would accrue to the cause he maintains, from fixing the 47th verse as the termination of one subject, and the 48th as the commencement of another. But these matters will soon come regularly under review; and therefore need not be mentioned on this occasion. On the present subject, it may be enough to say, that the reasons for dividing the discourse after the 47th verse being completely inefficient—and the author himself allowing as he does, with strange inconsistency, the point of division to be “immaterial\*”—I shall henceforward, with the acknowledged concurrence of Roman Catholic and Protestant writers, consider the first part of the discourse as continued to the 51st verse. Arguments for any doctrine,

\* Discourses, Vol. II. p. 142.

when founded on an arbitrary division like that attempted by Dr Wiseman, must be reprobated by all who feel the attainment of religious truth to be an object of supreme importance. In the study of Scripture, let us honestly endeavour to resign ourselves to the current of divine thought; and not seek, by artificial means, to obstruct its progress.....I have now sufficiently explained the ultimate object of Dr Wiseman's first lecture.

After reading three or four pages of the second lecture, I seemed to be in pursuit of a phantom which I could not overtake. What, I asked myself, What *is* Dr Wiseman's object; and what are the means of obtaining it? Some time elapsed before I could form a probable conjecture as to the train of thought, which had passed through the author's mind. At length, however, I fancied—first, that he deemed it a settled point that there was a total change of subject after the 47th verse; secondly, that he supposed the multitude, who had heard the discourse, to have understood the part before the change *figuratively*—and the part after the change *literally*; thirdly, that he was confident that good reasons might be given for the Jews having so understood each part; and lastly, that, in consequence of all these considerations, each part ought to be so understood by us. Something of this kind appears to have been intended, if an opinion may be formed from intimations dropped here and there; and more especially from the

following passages, in which the writer's purposes are the most clearly developed:

"The phrases which occur in the first part of the discourse were calculated to convey to the minds of those who heard our Saviour, the idea of listening to his doctrines and believing in him; the more so, as he positively explained them in that sense. But after the transition I have pointed out, a totally different phraseology occurs; which to his hearers could not possibly convey that meaning, nor any other, save that of a real eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood." (p. 49.)....Again, "We are therefore authorized to conclude that, whether we consider the customary meaning of the phrases as in use among the Jews of our Saviour's time, or the clear and decisive explanation which he gave to them, those who heard him could not possibly misunderstand this (first) portion of his discourse, nor give any other interpretation to the figure there used, than that of being spiritually nourished by the doctrines which he brought from heaven... I assert that, if we accurately consider the phraseology of this (second) portion of the chapter, according to the only manner in which it could possibly be understood by the Jews whom Christ addressed, we must conclude that they would necessarily infer a change of topic in it, and be convinced that the doctrine now delivered was of a real eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of him who addressed them." (p. 55.)

There seemed, indeed, to be in all this a degree of refinement calculated rather to excite surprise than to inspire confidence. An unwarranted division of a discourse; an assumed fact; proofs of its probability; and a conclusion from the whole—presented altogether a tortuous appearance. In ornamental grounds, as I well knew, the serpentine walk is generally admired; but I was also aware that, in the field of reason, the straight path



is preferred. With these notions, and with a conviction that, in reality, the result was made to depend upon *what the Jews understood at the time*, I strongly suspected that the hermeneutical principles already discussed had been in operation. On examining them, I soon found that I had warrant for suspicion. Not that the case was eminently clear; as the reader will collect from the following passage, which I present as a perfect specimen of the indefinite in writing:

“The whole science of interpretation, or, as it is technically called, *hermeneutics*, whether applied to a sacred or profane author, depends upon one simple and obvious principle:—*The true meaning of a word or phrase is that which was attached to it at the time when the person, whom we interpret, wrote or spoke.* Language is intended only to convey to our hearers, as nearly as possible, the ideas which pass in our own thought; and that person possesses the best command of it, who most exactly transfuses, by his expressions, into the minds of others, the impressions which exist in his own. But, as words and phrases have certain definite meanings at any given period, it follows that the speaker necessarily selects such, as his knowledge of their exact force teaches him will represent precisely his thoughts and feelings. From this we deduce, that the impression naturally made by any expressions upon the hearer, or, in other words, the sense in which he must have understood them, is, generally speaking, the proper criterion of the sense intended by the speaker. I have said *generally* speaking; because words are occasionally misunderstood. But this is an extraordinary case: it supposes a defect in the speaker or hearer; and we always take it for granted that our words are rightly understood, unless there is a special reason to suppose the contrary. Still, even this case does not affect my observations, nor the principles of hermeneutics, which are based upon them; because



this science does not decide by impressions actually made, but by those which the words were necessarily calculated to make, at the time, upon that audience; and this is the sense in which the word *impression* is to be understood..... Of course, when I speak of our Saviour's discourses being *understood*, I do not mean that they were comprehended." (pp. 20, 21.)

That person is not a little to be envied for his "understanding" or "comprehension," or both, who, after winding through the foregoing labyrinth of sentences, can flatter himself that he emerges with even the slightest notion of the bearings of his position, at any single point of his course. Let us once more endeavour to thread the maze. The learned writer begins with "the meaning of a word or phrase;" and if I rightly conjecture, glides without hesitation to the impression made by an entire address, or section of an address:—when it is clear that "a word or phrase" might be understood by one, who mistook the import of the sentence—and the sentence, by one who misapprehended the whole discourse. Then as to the discourse, we are first told that the sense is that in which *it must have been* understood—in other words, in which *it was* understood; for although we are immediately informed that it may have been *misunderstood*—yet without "a special reason," we are by no means to suppose that it was. This, however, is of no consequence; as we are not to consider the impression actually made, but that which the words were calculated to make.... In the midst of

such transitions—from fallacy to ambiguity, and from ambiguity to fallacy—it is lamentable to think how completely the minds of men—of young men especially—must be bewildered. And not to dwell upon the extreme improbability that such devious paths should lead to truth—is he, who has thus been taught to wander in uncertainty, in a disposition at all likely either to discover the truth, or hold it in estimation? If such be the science of hermeneutics, I trust that no reader of these pages will ever engage in the study.... There is only one remark by Dr Wiseman, respecting the application of these principles to our Lord's discourses: namely, that “when he speaks of the discourses being understood, he does not mean to say they were comprehended.” The natural inference seems to be, that the principles laid down, if principles they can be called, are quite inapplicable to the purpose for which they were designed. When, indeed, we consider the low and unworthy notions of our Lord's immediate followers themselves, respecting the Messiah's kingdom—when we recollect how often he reproved even *them*, on account of their dulness of apprehension and hardness of heart, with regard to the objects of his mission—and when we bear in mind how thoroughly carnal, worldly and selfish, the crowds that surrounded him frequently manifested themselves to be—we feel shocked at the idea of making our Lord's hearers the interpreters of his

discourses—in those instances, more especially, in which, as in John vi. they are of a highly spiritual character. He had, too often, reason to complain of a faithless and stubborn generation; but through God's good providence, the very perversion of his instructions has afforded admonitions, of unspeakable importance to all succeeding ages. On this subject, let me finally observe, that I do not oppose the application, of the above-mentioned principles of interpretation, to our Lord's discourses, from any dread that Dr Wiseman would, by their application, secure some advantage; but because I would guard young men against the application of such principles in other cases....But the particulars of the second lecture now demand attention.

I agree with Dr Wiseman in thinking that “the phrases which occur in the first part of the discourse (John vi.) were calculated to convey to the minds of those who heard our Saviour, the idea of listening to his doctrines and believing in him; the more so, as he positively explained them in that sense.” I moreover maintain that the first part ought to be extended from v. 47, Dr Wiseman's limit, to v. 51. It is requisite, however, to examine the learned author's arguments, in proof of the proposition just stated in his own language; for they throw great light upon his subsequent reasoning. To the consideration of those arguments, therefore, I now betake myself.



By virtue of passages—not only from the Old Testament\*, but from Philo Judæus, the Talmud, the Rabbins and the Sanscrit—Dr Wiseman learnedly proves that bread, or food, or that (by whatever name it may be called) which supports the body, had in discourse been used figuratively for those spiritual communications which, when duly received, afford nutriment and health to the soul. He thus professes to “demonstrate that *to the Jews* it was no unusual image, no harsh phrase, to speak of *doctrines* under the form of bread or food;” and so evinces the propriety with which our Saviour, “the Word and Wisdom of the Father,” addressed his hearers, when, “identifying himself with his doctrines,” he “called himself the bread of life†.” The truth is, that our Lord, throughout his ministry, employed the miracles he wrought, and the events which daily occurred, as the means of instruction in the things appertain-

\* The following are the passages from the Old Testament. “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good.” Is. lv. 1, 2;—“Thy words were found, and I did eat them.” Jer. xv. 16;—“I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.” Amos viii. 11;—“Come [Wisdom speaks] eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.” Prov. ix. 5.... Also, from the Apocrypha, “With the bread of understanding shall she feed him, and give him the water of wisdom to drink.” Ecclesiasticus xv. 3.

† Lectures, pp. 52, 53.



ing to an endless existence; and he availed himself of them in such a manner, that, whether the figurative import of his words was more or less intelligible to his countrymen, his meaning in many instances, either by additional remarks at the time or in subsequent conversation with his disciples, became very clear. No one, however, can read the Gospels, without perceiving that there were likewise instances, in which his words, although not at the time understood, were left—so far as we know, without the slightest explanation—to produce their effect—which, we can easily suppose, they often would produce—on reflection, and in the after-time. We have moreover every reason to believe that, in the degrees of divine knowledge afforded, as well as in the working of miracles, especial regard was had to the various moral dispositions of the people. The teachable were taught, while the obstinate were left to their ignorance; and without attempting to pry into the divine councils, there are, even to our imperfect conceptions, distinct intimations that, in such a method of proceeding, judgment was blended with mercy.

After the miraculous supply of food to the five thousand, as recorded in the opening of John vi, our Lord—aware of the anxiety of the multitudes for a similar relief of their wants, and of the disregard of that divine power from which the supply had come—began to admonish them re-

specting the spiritual support, of which they stood in need. They were seeking after "the meat which perisheth;" but they ought to labour for that "which endureth unto everlasting life." That, indeed, was the meat which he was come to give unto them: "the true bread from heaven," which "giveth life unto the world." He was himself that bread—"the bread of life"—to be given to those who came to him, and believed on him. "This," he said, "is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent;"—"He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst;"—"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life;"—"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am the bread of life." He who thus declared himself to be "the bread of life" is elsewhere called by St John (1 Ep. i. 1), "the word of life;" and towards the end of this chapter (v. 68) is acknowledged by St Peter to have had "the words of eternal life." No extraneous learning, then, is demanded, to perceive that the important truths, primarily intended to be inculcated, were these—that to hear and believe were the great requisites on the part of men; and that spiritual sustenance, even unto life eternal, would be the corresponding gift on the part of God. And thus, as far, at least, as the 51st verse, this discourse may be

considered to be an amplification, by means of a constant allusion to "the bread of life," of what had been taught on another occasion; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) All this is so clear, that, till we come to the 51st verse, Roman Catholics and Protestants, as Dr Wiseman truly remarks, "are equally agreed" that our Lord's discourse "refers entirely to believing in him." The truth is that, neither the hearers of that age, nor the readers of the present, can be deemed much more indebted, for their intelligence of the subject, to the above-mentioned expositions of the terms *food* and *bread*, than to the opinion in the Midrasch Coheleth, previously referred to by Dr Wiseman, that "as [Moses] the first *Goel* (deliverer) brought down manna"—"so likewise will [the Messiah] the second *Goel* cause manna to descend\*." In the art of interpreting, as well as in other arts, the time is at hand, when it will be necessary to simplify our methods of proceeding very considerably.

In addition to the ancient illustrations of figurative language already pointed out, Dr Wiseman advances other reasons for thinking that the former part of the discourse "was calculated to convey

\* Lectures, p. 38.

the idea of listening to our Lord's instructions and believing in him." The first is, that, although our Lord calls himself *the bread of life*, "he does not suffer the idea of *eating him* to escape his lips;" but speaks of coming to him, and *believing in him*\*. Now, whatever idea may be thought to have "escaped his lips," we certainly do not find that he speaks of *eating him*, before the 57th verse; which, as it belongs to the latter part, may be reserved for future consideration.... The second reason is, that our Lord, through this section of the discourse, "does not once use the expression to *eat* even the bread of life†." To this we may reply—1. generally—that however metaphorical may be the language adopted—whenever spiritual benefits are declared to result, there must be not only the affording of the means on the part of God, but, whether actually expressed or not, a corresponding acceptance of them on the part of man:—2. particularly—that when (to take one instance out of several) our Lord said (v. 35) "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me *shall never hunger*"—the idea of *eating* is assuredly implied; they would not hunger, because they would be satisfied:—and 3. with reference to Dr Wiseman himself—that when he affirms that the expression, to *eat* the bread of life, does not occur in "this section of the discourse," he refers to his own unwarrantable division

\* Lectures, pp. 53, 54.

† Ibid. p. 54.



between the 47th and 48th verses. The expression appears in the 50th verse; which every one had previously assigned to the first part of the discourse.... The learned author's third reason is, that our Lord "simply says that the Father *gave* them the true bread from heaven (v. 32), and that the bread of God *giveth life* to the world (v. 33)." The meaning of this appears to be that, as the bread was merely said to be *given*, they would not be led to infer that it was to be *eaten*. We need not look far, to discover the futility of the argument now before us. When, in verse 51, our Lord said, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"—the Jews had no difficulty in understanding that *eating* was implied; for they immediately enquired, "How can this man *give* us his flesh TO EAT?"

The notion, which Dr Wiseman appears to have adopted, that, in the first part of the discourse, our Saviour designedly abstained from phraseology, which would convey the idea of *eating* the bread of life, is not very consistent with the importance assigned to the ancient authorities, alleged in evidence that such phraseology would be, to the Jews, perfectly intelligible, in its metaphorical sense. In Isaiah (see p. 65) we find—"Come ye, buy and *eat*:—hearken diligently unto me, and *eat* ye that which is good:"—in Jeremiah—"Thy words were found, and I did *eat* them:"—

in the Proverbs—"Come *eat* of my bread, and *drink* of the wine which I have mingled." To the same effect are the passages derived from Philo, the Talmud, the Rabbins and the Sanscrit. Why, then, should the learned author attribute to our Lord a "remarkable reserve" in this matter—when the turn of expression, being "one in ordinary use among the Jews and other orientals"—could "present no difficulty"? His authorities are not stronger for *bread* in its metaphorical sense, than for *eating* in its metaphorical sense. This notion of "reserve" is, moreover, at variance with what we know of our Lord's language in other instances. Thus, in John vii. 37, he declared, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and *drink*;" and that the drinking then spoken of was not to be literally understood, is apparent from our Lord's subsequent expressions—"He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water"—and still more, from the comment of the Evangelist—"But this spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."—Even when conversing with the woman of Samaria (John iv. 13, 14),—whose perception of the meaning of words Dr Wiseman will not attribute to the sources of intelligence already mentioned—our Lord employed without scruple the same mode of expression: "Jesus answered

and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever *drinketh* of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." And yet, the *drinking* of that *water* is undoubtedly to be understood figuratively. These observations are offered, less for the purpose of obviating the difficulty which the learned lecturer is willing to raise, than with the design of removing one among the almost innumerable misrepresentations of Scripture which are found in the volume under review.

I conclude, from all that has been stated, that the first section of the discourse was "calculated to convey," to the Jews, the idea of hearing and believing; but that, if they really had an impression that they were so required to hear and believe, it must, in the main, have been on different grounds from those alleged by Dr Wiseman. We are thus introduced to another subject of enquiry:—namely, what, in point of fact, were the impressions on the minds of the Jews, in consequence of the first section of the discourse.

Although Dr Wiseman, at the outset of his second lecture, professed to be showing that "the phrases which occur in the first part of our Lord's discourse *were calculated to convey* the idea of listening to the doctrines of our Lord and believing in him"—he thinks himself "authorized to

conclude" that "those who heard him *could not possibly misunderstand* that portion, nor give any other interpretation to the figure there used, than that of being spiritually nourished by the doctrines which he brought down from heaven\*." My hope is, that I "cannot possibly misunderstand" the learned author, when I suppose him thus to affirm, that the Jews actually did give a spiritual interpretation to the first part. Such then is Dr Wiseman's plan of operation. He enunciates one proposition, as about to be established; and, at the end of the process, he enunciates another, as actually proved. The discourse "was calculated" to produce a certain effect upon the Jews—therefore it *did* produce that effect; on the principle, I suppose, that to point out, in any case, what ought to have been the conduct of men, is only another method of ascertaining what it really was. A strange principle this, under any circumstances; but above all strange, when applied to the occurrences which attended our Lord's earthly existence. Whatever Dr Wiseman may imagine, as to the impossibility of misunderstanding the purport of our Lord's discourse; the people undoubtedly did misunderstand it, from first to last. Their thoughts and expectations were wholly carnal throughout. They recollected that they had eaten of the loaves and had been filled; and were intent upon similar manifestations of power in their favour. I cannot

\* Lectures, p. 55.



imagine any intelligent person reading the chapter, without perceiving that such were their feelings. What is their language?—"What sign showest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat."—And when our Lord informed them that "the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world"—their reply—(v. 34) "Lord, evermore give us this bread (Κύριε, πάντοτε δός ἡμῖν τὸν ἄρτον τοῦτον)"—as surely indicates temporal views, as did the reply of the Samaritan woman in the fourth chapter (v. 15)—"Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw (Κύριε, δός μοι τοῦτο. τὸ ὕδωρ, ἵνα μὴ διψῶ, μηδὲ ἔρχομαι ἐνθάδε ἀντλεῖν)."—The same gross views were still present to their minds, when they afterwards (v. 41) "murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven;" and their disappointment and discontent were roused to the uttermost when (v. 52) they "strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" For my own part, I cannot discover the slightest intimation of a single idea, in their minds, save that of obtaining a supply of food, similar to that of the preceding day.... On this part of the subject, it would be useless to add more than a single concluding remark—which is this: To commence an investigation, with

a division of discourse, at once opposed to reason and disapproved by every thing that can be deemed authority—subsequently to engage in the hopeless attempt to prove *a fact*, not by evidence but by argument—such, so far as we have yet had an opportunity to observe, are the peculiar characteristics of Dr Wiseman's undertaking.

On proceeding to Dr Wiseman's remarks on the latter portion of the discourse—that is, from v. 48 to the end—we find him asserting, “that if we accurately consider the phraseology of this portion of the chapter, according to the only manner in which it could possibly be understood by the Jews whom Christ addressed, we must conclude that they would necessarily infer a change of topic in it, and be convinced that the doctrine now delivered was of a real eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of him who addressed them\*.” That the Jews understood the latter part of the discourse, as they had understood the former, in the very grossest sense which the words admitted—there can be no doubt; but whether they ought so to have understood it, is another matter, the consideration of which will chiefly occupy the remainder of this section. To that consideration I shall request the reader's attention, after a few words on that total change of subject, so strenuously insisted upon by the learned author.

In v. 48, we find, “I am the bread of life

\* Lectures, p. 56.

(Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ἄρτος τῆς ζωῆς)"—and in v. 31, we have the identical words. In v. 49, we find, "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead"—referring to what the Jews had said, v. 31, "Our fathers did eat manna in the desert." In v. 50, we find, "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die"—reminding them of his former reply to them (v. 32), "My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." In v. 51, we find, "I am the living bread: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever"—corresponding to v. 35, "I am the bread of life—he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Even in the latter part of v. 51, where our Lord first mentions *his flesh*, no one can fail to remark how closely he connects it—identifies it, indeed—with *the bread of life*, on which he had so largely expatiated: "And *the bread* that I will give is *my flesh*, which I will give for the life of the world." And finally, after dwelling upon eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, observe how carefully (vv. 57, 58) the subject is connected with all that had preceded: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so, he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever." If what has thus been brought together

is not a full proof of unity of subject—of continuity of purpose, on the part of the speaker—from the beginning of the discourse to the end, I utterly despair of finding unity of design, in any ancient writing whatever. Identified moreover, as we perceive the eating of the flesh of Christ and the drinking of his blood to be, with eating the bread of life, which is on all hands allowed to be a spiritual act—I must acknowledge myself to be incapable of drawing an inference at all, before I can hesitate to believe that the eating of the flesh and the drinking of the blood (however it may be interpreted) must likewise be essentially a spiritual act. In fine, my real opinion is, that, if the latter part of this discourse be referred to the Eucharist, it entirely subverts the Roman Catholic doctrine of our Lord's corporal presence—and of the carnal eating and drinking of his body and blood—in that Sacrament.

I now proceed to Dr Wiseman's speculations on the latter part of the discourse; with regard to the phraseology of which, he enumerates various peculiarities, which, as he states, "oblige us to consider the topic which it treats, as totally distinct from that which occupies the former portion of the chapter." The first peculiarity is involved in obscurity:—whether because it contains something too vague for language to convey, or too absurd for the writer to have attempted to express clearly—let the reader judge:



“1. We have seen above, that after our Saviour, in consequence of difficulties found by the Jews, had commenced, at verse 35, to explain his sentiments literally, he never returns again to the figurative expression, until after he closes that section at verse 47. If we suppose him to continue the same topic after this verse, we must believe him, after having spent thirteen verses in doing away with the obscurity of his parabolic expressions, and in giving the explanation of its figures, to return again to his obscure phrases, and to take up once more the use of the same parable which he had so long abandoned for its literal interpretation.” (p. 57.)

The position here taken, I strongly suspect, is this: An instructor having, in the course of his observations, employed certain figurative terms, the intended import of which he subsequently takes care to explain, we are not to suppose that he will resume the said figurative expressions in the same sense. Now, in reality, is it not clear, to the commonest apprehension, that the explanation previously given of such terms is the very best warrant for recurring to them in that sense? Nay more, after such explanation, would not the use of the same terms, *in another sense*, infallibly lead into error? And yet this, if I mistake not, is what Dr Wiseman has attributed to our Lord, in the present discourse. In the beginning of the discourse, mention is made of a heavenly gift, under the similitude of *the bread of life*. Faith is then declared to be the medium by which the gift is received and the benefit realized. This, according to Dr Wiseman, is the doctrine enforced to the end of the 47th verse. When our Lord,

after that verse, reverts to his original similitude of the bread of life, he cannot, according to the learned author, be thought to employ the similitude in the same sense. The bread from heaven must no longer be held to represent those divine truths which our Saviour came to reveal; nor must faith be deemed the means of receiving them. Now, if an interpreter of Scripture is allowed to divide a discourse where he pleases, as Dr Wiseman has done—without the concurrence of a single commentator, good, bad, or indifferent; and without a single reason, which he ought not to have been ashamed to produce—if such an interpreter is then allowed to decide that the word, on which the import of the discourse mainly depends, has one signification above the line of division, and another signification below it—what, I ask, is such a process, but the means of extracting, from the pages of Holy Writ, any doctrine that may be the most agreeable to the fancy of the individual? When such modes of interpretation are connected in our minds with the hermeneutical principles laid down by the learned author, the entire plan of operation cannot but be considered as one of the most extraordinary moral phenomena which have been exhibited in modern times.

The second peculiarity alleged by Dr Wiseman has already (p. 69) been stated; and is again recorded in this place partly to show the kind of argument of which a learned controversialist can

twice condescend to avail himself; and partly for the purpose of offering a few observations on the subject.

“2. We have seen likewise how carefully our Lord avoids, throughout the first part, the harsh expression to *eat him*, even where the turn of his phrase seemed to invite him to use it; on the contrary in the latter section, he employs it without scruple, and even repeats it again and again. This is a remarkable difference of phraseology between the two sections.” (pp. 57, 58.)

Dr Wiseman, when before adverting to this subject, observed—with reference to the words of Isaiah and Jeremiah (which I have twice quoted, pp. 65, 70)—“these examples demonstrate that *to the Jews* it was no unusual image, no harsh phrase, to speak of doctrines under the form of bread or food. But the figure could not be pushed farther than that: Jeremiah or Isaiah could not have been represented in the passage quoted from them, as saying, ‘Come and *eat me*\*.’” Very true: And neither could Isaiah, nor yet Jeremiah, be represented, as saying—“He that *believeth on me* hath everlasting life.” These are, to the intelligent, among the marks which distinguish the subordinate functions even of those prophets, great as they were, from the paramount authority of THE SON OF GOD. In such considerations, indeed, there is high matter—upon which, did my limits allow, I should be glad to expatiate; but enough

\* Lectures, p. 53.

has been stated, to demonstrate the extreme rashness with which a phrase, that might or might not have suited one of the old prophets, has been made a test of the language of the Messiah himself....Farther: "Throughout the first part," says Dr Wiseman, "our Lord carefully avoids the expression, to *eat him*;" but, "in the latter section, he employs it without scruple, and even repeats it again and again." Here is another instance of the recklessness of this learned writer. Our Lord has used the expression, to *eat him, once*; that is, in the 57th verse:—but so far was he from "repeating it again and again," that he has never used it *except that once*. In whatever point of view such misrepresentations are beheld, what confidence can possibly be placed in the individual, who has thus presented them to the world? It can be to no avail, to Dr Wiseman, to allege that, by the expression, to *eat him*, he meant to *eat his flesh*, or to *eat the bread of life*; for he has separately treated of these latter expressions. My fear is that he intended to write what he did write; and that, by what he wrote, he also intended to produce a considerable effect. But, in truth, so much had been previously said by our Lord, to identify *himself* with the bread of life—such a constant reference had been made to faith in himself, as the great principle required on the part of his hearers—that, even if, in the latter section of the discourse, he had used that expression, "again and



again," there would have been nothing, so gradual was the change of phraseology, in the least inconsistent with the most complete unity of subject. And although, for reasons sufficiently apparent, we should not expect the expression "he that *eateth me*," from Isaiah or Jeremiah—yet there are considerations, furnished by the learned author himself, which may well reconcile us to the use of it by our Saviour. In the 24th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom is personified, and represented as addressing the children of men. Among other declarations, there is (v. 21) the following: "They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty:"—where eating and drinking signify hearing and receiving instruction. If, then, Wisdom may, in this sense, use the expression "they that eat me"—why may we not understand our Saviour, "the Word and Wisdom of the Father"—when *identifying himself with his doctrines* (to adopt Dr Wiseman's language)—as employing a similar expression in a similar sense?... But, the learned author objects, "Wisdom is speaking as an abstract personage, an allegorical being, to whom imaginary life is given; and consequently to whom the terms could not, by possibility, be literally applied\*." Is then the literal sense of expressions always to be adhered to, unless it cannot "by possibility" be maintained? Is there no attention to be paid to the

\* Lectures, p. 53.

context? For example, in the midst of a discourse, in which our Lord has all along been *identifying* HIMSELF *with his doctrines*, shall we understand *one phrase* relating to himself literally—although forbidden by every feeling that is creditable to our nature—although forbidden by that common sense, which commands us to take care that we interpret not any portion of such discourse, so as to place an entire section of it in contradiction to the rest?—The learned author advances a second objection—from which it appears that “this ideal person (Wisdom) speaks of herself under the image of a plant—a vine;” but after various attempts to ascertain in what way this objection can be brought to bear upon the subject before us, I have desisted from the undertaking, in despair. I should have thought the notion favourable to my own views. As however I have nothing but conjectures to offer, it may be advisable to lose no time, in deriving all the advantage we can, from the learned author’s subsequent lucubrations.

The third peculiarity, mentioned by Dr Wiseman, is couched in the following terms:

“3. So long as Christ speaks of himself as the object of faith, under the image of a spiritual food, he represents this food as given by *the Father*, (vv. 32, 33, 39, 40, 44); but after verse 47, he speaks of the food, which he now describes, as to be given by *himself*, (vv. 52, 53). This marked difference in the *giver* of the two communications, proposed in the two divisions of the discourse, points out that a different

*gift* is likewise promised. If faith is the gift in both, there is no ground for the distinction made in them; if there is a transition to a real eating, the whole is clear." (p. 58.)

Dr Wiseman's distinction—representing *God* as the giver in the former part of the discourse, and *our Lord himself* as the giver in the latter part—is a mistake; not the greatest which has been made, but the greatest which the case admits. When our Lord (v. 27) first recommended this spiritual food to his hearers, he used the following terms: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which THE SON OF MAN shall give unto you." It appears, then, that *our Lord* is the giver of the spiritual food, as well as *the Father*—no less in the former part of the discourse, than in the latter. If therefore, according to Dr Wiseman's views, a diversity of givers implies a diversity of gifts—an identity of givers in the two parts of the discourse indicates an identity of gifts in those parts. And this is all that I shall offer in reply to the learned lecturer's notable distinction.

Dr Wiseman's fourth peculiarity, occupying more than two pages, is too long for transcription. My object therefore must be, to give its meaning without diminution of its force:—"In the first part of the discourse, our Lord speaks of *coming unto him* (vv. 35, 36, 44, 45); which implies a principle of *faith* (Matt. xi. 28; Luke vi. 47; John v. 40; vii. 37). In the second part, he speaks of *abiding*



*in him* (vv. 56, 57); which indicates an internal principle of *love* or *charity* (John xiv. 23; xv. 4-9; 1 Ep. ii. 24; iv. 16, 17). So that the effects of the doctrine inculcated after the 48th verse are quite different from those before rehearsed; and as the latter apply to *faith*, so these are such as describe a union with Christ through *love*. Something, therefore, is here delivered or instituted, which tends to nourish and perfect this virtue, and not faith; the topic, therefore, is changed, and a transition has taken place\*.".....Most assuredly, the distinction here drawn, between the internal principle appropriate to the first part and that peculiar to the second, is as visionary as the division of the discourse itself at the 47th verse—as the notion of different givers—or the notion of different gifts—before and after that division. When, for instance, in v. 29, our Lord said, “This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent”—can any one suppose that he did not mean a continuance of belief—an abiding in him? When again, in v. 35, he declared, “He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst”—does not the very turn of expression imply, as before, an abiding with him? In these expressions, which occur before the 47th verse, the principle of love is as strongly implied, as in some of those which are found subsequently to that verse: When it is said,

\* Lectures, pp. 58—60.



v. 50, "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die"—and in v. 51, "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever"—we must not imagine that the eating here mentioned is an act once for all—but an habitual act of faith; of a faith which cannot exist, without a principle of love. The distinction of principle, therefore, is, as I have said, altogether visionary; although the abiding in Christ may be more clearly inculcated in the latter part, than in the former. But if Dr Wiseman supposes that, in this, there is any thing tending to confirm his own interpretation, more than that of the Protestant who differs from him the most widely—I know not in what terms to express my opinion of his misconceptions on the subject. The truth is, that arguments of this kind are of so attenuated a texture, that they almost elude the touch....With reference to the topic just discussed, it is worthy of remark that, *after* the discourse to the people, our Lord's conversation, with his disciples, still turned upon faith: "There are some of you that believe not." And thus, Peter's final avowal, for himself and his brethren, was—a belief in him, as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." This circumstance affords a strong confirmation of the opinion, that faith, in our Lord and his doctrines, was the grand principle inculcated throughout the discourse.

The preceding argument of the learned author, although but little entitled to regard, is far superior to his fifth peculiarity, which now claims attention. To myself there is, I confess, something mortifying in the thought, that—in a formal treatise, by a grave divine, on an important subject—there should be an attempt to influence the reader's mind by such means as I am about to point out.... Dr Wiseman, after making a few observations which do not require notice, allows, for a moment, that “the bread of life, which our Lord identifies with himself, is to be eaten: in other words, that he is our food; and that by this is signified, that we must believe in him.” Then comes the objection:

“5. But if to feed on Christ mean to believe in Christ, then, to eat the flesh of Christ (if the phrase has to be considered parallel) must signify to believe *in the flesh* of Christ. This is absurd: for the flesh and blood of Christ was not an object of faith to those who really sinned by believing him too literally to be only a man; nor can our belief in them be the source of eternal life. Protestants say, that, as to feed on Christ signifies to believe in him, so, to eat his flesh and drink his blood, means to believe in his passion. But they do not bring a single argument to show that such a phrase was in use, or would have been intelligible to his hearers. The expressions, therefore, used in the second part of our Lord's discourse are in no wise parallel to those of the first, nor can they bear the same meaning. In fact, the only one they can bear is the literal signification.” (pp. 61, 62.)

The reasoning, in the outset of the foregoing extract, which makes eating *the flesh* of Christ to signify believing in *his flesh*, because eating *him*

signifies believing in *him*—is that which I alluded to, as mortifying to behold, in the well-considered production of a learned writer. If, according to the supposition, eating *the flesh* of Christ be equivalent to eating *him*—and if by eating *him* is meant believing in *him*—then must eating *the flesh* of Christ also signify believing in *him*....But as Dr Wiseman, in commenting on the inference—“to believe *in the flesh* of Christ”—which he thought proper to draw, has ventured to pronounce, “this is absurd”—I will also venture to take a word with the learned lecturer on the subject; and the result may be, to show that the discredit, inevitably attaching to the procedure, is not the only thing to be considered, when a man has recourse to so wretched a perversion of words, as that just witnessed. There will, I trust, be readers of these pages, who scarcely need to be reminded how strenuously the Apostle St John, in particular, has dwelt upon the reality of our Lord’s human nature. Such readers will be aware of the prevalence, in the early ages, of tenets directly opposed to that reality; and will justly be surprised at the strange treatment which a belief, *in the flesh* of Christ, has received at Dr Wiseman’s hands. Are we, they will be disposed to ask, warranted in thinking the belief, of the *real* humanity of Christ, a point of little consequence, because some persons erroneously maintain the doctrine of his *mere* humanity? What then, in addition to the declar-



ations of Holy Writ, mean those very remarkable enumerations, of the particulars of his earthly existence, which are found in the Apostles' Creed and in the Nicene Creed? Why is the perfect human nature of Christ so carefully dwelt upon, by the ablest Christian writers of ancient times? Has Dr Wiseman forgotten that, in the fifth century, Pope Gelasius wrote a book to establish the reality of the two natures of Christ—in opposition to the widely-spread opinion, that the humanity was absorbed in the divinity—and consequently lost? Readers moreover, such as I have imagined, might refer him to the sentiments of his own Church upon the subject—even in later times. In the Rhemish Testament, for instance, they might suggest that there is the following note on John i. 14, “THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH:”

“This is the high and divine testimony of Christ's incarnation, and that he vouchsafed to become man; for the acknowledging of which inexplicable benefit and giving humble thanks for the same, all Christian people in the world, by tradition of the fathers, prostrate themselves or kneel down, when they hear it sung or said at the holy Mass, either in this Gospel, or in the creed, by these words *ET HOMO FACTUS EST.*”

The same readers might also deem the note, in the same work, on 1 John iv. 2, “EVERY SPIRIT, THAT CONFESSETH THAT JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH, IS OF GOD”—worthy of attention; although they might think the com-



mentator too much disposed to restrict the application of the sentiment, in the first part of the note—and too much inclined to enact the controversialist, in the latter part:

“The apostle speaketh according to that time, and for that part of Christian doctrine which then was specifically to be confessed, taught and maintained, against certain wicked heretics, Cerinthus, Ebion, and the like, that taught wickedly and against the person and both natures of Christ Jesus. The apostle therefore giveth the faithful people this token to know the true teachers of those days from the false. Not that this mark would serve for all times, or in case of all other false doctrines, but that it was then a necessary note. As if a good Catholic writer, pastor, or parents would warn all theirs now in these days, to give ear only to such teachers as acknowledge Christ our Saviour to be really present and sacrificed in the B. Mass; and that all such are true preachers and of God, the rest to be of the devil, or to be counted the spirit of Antichrist. Which spirit of Antichrist (he saith) was come even then, and is no doubt much more now in all heretics; all being precursors of that great Antichrist which shall come towards the latter end.”

The reality of our Lord's passion depends upon the reality of his human nature; and it is singular enough that language such as Dr Wiseman has employed, respecting a belief *in the flesh* of Christ, should have come from ROME. What renders this language the more strange is, that it was adopted after some reflection. “To believe *in the flesh* of Christ,” says Dr Wiseman, “is absurd; for the flesh and blood of Christ was not an object of faith to those who really sinned by believing him too literally only a man; nor can our belief

in them be the source of eternal life." There is, in all this, a disregard, of TRADITION as well as of SCRIPTURE, not easy to be found in any other volume than that of Dr Wiseman.

In the course of the last paragraph from the learned author, there are these sentences:—"Protestants say, that, as to feed on Christ signifies to believe in him, so, to eat his flesh and drink his blood, means to believe in his passion. But they do not bring a single argument to show that such a phrase was in use, or would have been intelligible to his hearers." The phrase which the Protestants alluded to apply to our Lord's passion, not then undergone—Dr Wiseman applies to the Eucharist, not then instituted. And "he does not bring a single argument to show that such a phrase was in use, or would have been intelligible to the hearers." I have never yet known an instance, in which excessive subtilty did not entail disastrous consequences upon a controversial writer.... Various remarks, on the last paragraph, might still be added; but the topics already brought forward are, as we learn, "mere *præludia* to the real and decisive examination of the point which yet remains." To the sixth, and final, argument, then, let us proceed without delay.

Dr Wiseman having, by means of much learning, proved that *bread*, or *food*, was, in ancient times, used figuratively for *doctrine*, concluded that *the bread*, mentioned in the former part of

our Lord's discourse, could not but have been so understood. While, acknowledging that it ought to have been so understood, I showed that it was not. The learned writer now occupies many of the last twenty pages of his second lecture in proving, by similar means, that the phrase of *eating the flesh* was, in ancient times, used figuratively, in a sense excluded by the circumstances of the case; and concludes that this expression, in the latter part of the discourse, could not but have been understood literally. I grant that it was understood literally; but contend that it ought not to have been so understood. In this portion of his lecture, Dr Wiseman certainly exhibits passages from the Old Testament, the Arabic, the Syriac, the Rabbins, the Greek and the Latin, in which some expressions of the kind now under review indicate an injury either to person or character—in short, an evil intention. The ordinary meaning of *eating the flesh* of a person, when taken figuratively, appears to be, *to calumniate* him. Whether other significations may be occasionally involved in such expressions, I will not enquire; the enquiry, according to my view of the matter, being of no consequence. To say the truth, Dr Wiseman, while discussing this topic, writes like a man who is convinced that his argument is invulnerable; nevertheless, there will be no great difficulty in discovering its weak points. After the learned author had employed almost

twenty pages in proving that *to eat the flesh* of any one is used *metaphorically* in a bad sense, so that, when interpreting John vi, the metaphorical meaning must be discarded—he ought, by all means, to have added a few pages, to show that *to eat the flesh* of any one is used *literally* in a good sense, so that there was a positive reason for maintaining the literal meaning in opposition to the figurative. If extraneous usage is to be the test in one case, we are justified in expecting that it should be produced in another. Dr Wiseman holds that, in John vi. *love*, or *charity*, is the internal principle implied in *eating the flesh* of Christ, according to his own literal sense: he ought, then, to follow up his own plan; and make out, by citations from the Old Testament, the Arabic, the Syriac, the Greek, and so on, that the literal eating of the flesh of a person, with a feeling of *love* and *charity*, admits of exemplification. Whatever difficulty, in this point of view, may stand in the way of the figurative interpretation, I will venture to say that much greater must be removed before the literal interpretation can be admitted; and I assert, without fear of contradiction, that he has no right to assume the truth of the literal meaning, till he has removed the objections to which it is exposed by the operation of his own principles.

On looking over the passages cited by Dr Wiseman—to prove that *to eat the flesh*, in its figurative



sense, meant, according to ancient usage, *to calumniate*—I have observed nothing, in a literary point of view, requiring notice; unless it be that the quotation from Martial—

Non deerunt tamen hac in urbe forsan  
Unus, vel duo, tresve, quatuorve,  
Pellem rodere qui *vellent* caninam—

would have been rendered exact in metre, truly grammatical, and in accordance with the printed editions, if it had been thus exhibited—

Non deerunt tamen hac in urbe forsan  
Unus, vel duo, tresve, quatuorve,  
Pellem rodere qui *velint* caninam.

Lib. v. Ep. 60. v. 8.

By way of conclusion, therefore, to the present section, I can now lay before the reader a few remarks upon the literal interpretation affixed by the Jews to our Lord's phrase, of *eating his flesh*; an interpretation vindicated by Dr Wiseman, as embodying the sense intended at the time.

What, then, did the Jews really understand by *eating the flesh* of Christ? Beyond all doubt, they understood it to signify the actual eating of the natural flesh of the individual whom they beheld. But, in order that there may be no mistake in this matter—which is of great consequence in the present enquiry—I shall here produce statements on the subject, by writers of the highest estimation in the Church of Rome. In the first place, I present the words of the famous annotator in the Rhemish Testament:

“This carnality of theirs [the Jews] stood in two points specially: First, that they imagined that he would kill himself, and cut and mangle his flesh into parts, and so give it them raw or roast to be eaten among them. Which could not be meant, saith S. Augustine, for that had contained an heinous and barbarous fact; and therefore they might, and should have been assured, that he would command no such thing: but some other sweet sense to be of his hard, mystical, or figurative words; and to be fulfilled in a sacrament, mystery, and a marvellous divine sort, otherwise than they could comprehend. Secondly, they did err touching his flesh, in that they took it to be the flesh of a mere man, and of a dead man also, when it should come to be eaten.” (From the note on John vi. 63.)

Such, in the judgment of this acute and learned commentator, were the thoroughly gross conceptions of the Jews—the grossest certainly that could possibly be entertained—on the subject. Let us now attend to the account of the same matter, given by a no less strenuous advocate, for the tenets of the Church of Rome, than Estius; who after observing that there are four modes of eating the flesh of Christ, and drinking his blood—namely, carnally, cruelly, sacramentally and spiritually—thus proceeds:

“Carnalem modum manducandi et bibendi corpus et sanguinem Christi, scriptura quidem non tradit, sed ex Christi verbis Joan 6. malè intellexerunt Capharnaitæ, putantes a Christo promitti carnem ejus manducandam, more carniū animalium occisorum, quæ laniatæ aut dissectæ in partes vel crudæ vorantur a bestiis, vel coctæ manducantur ab hominibus: et de sanguine similiter. Hunc modum et Dominus in evangelio tanquam carnalem reprobatur, et patres tanquam barbarum et flagitiosum explodunt et condemnant, nominatim Augustinus lib. 3. de doctrinâ Christianâ, c. 16.” (In lib. sent. iv. 9. 1. p. 110.)

Here we find Estius, as well as the Rhemish commentator, attributing to the Jews the grossest conceptions of eating the flesh of Christ:—conceptions which he declares to have been condemned by our Lord, as carnal—and rejected by the fathers, as barbarous and flagitious. To the same effect writes Dr Wetham, a Roman Catholic Professor at Douay—the editor of an English Testament, with annotations, published in 1730. In a note on v. 63, he denounces “the gross and carnal imaginations of those Capharnaïtes, that our Lord meant to give them his body and blood to eat, in a visible and bloody manner, *as flesh*, says St Augustine, *is sold in the market and in the shambles*.”...On entering upon the consideration of this point, I naturally wished to put the reader in possession of the sentiments of Roman Catholic divines, in relation to it; and having done so, by means of two or three instances, I need only state in addition, that, so far as I know, there is, among Protestant commentators, a perfect agreement with them in opinion, upon the subject. The case, indeed, is too clear for dispute. Such, then, was the Jewish interpretation of our Lord’s expressions; and that was the strictly literal interpretation. Now a large portion of Dr Wiseman’s lectures, on John vi. is employed in arguing against all figurative meanings, in the case, as prohibited by the very nature of the phrases themselves: in vindicating the rigorously literal meaning of those phrases:

in proving that they could not but be understood literally—that they were understood literally—and that they ought to be understood literally—that, in short, the Jews were perfectly right, in their views of the matter. To avoid the risk of misrepresentation, I once more transcribe his own words. In the latter part of our Lord's discourse, there is, he writes, “a totally different phraseology; which *to his hearers could not possibly convey that [figurative] meaning [which prevails through the first part] nor any other, save that of a real eating of his flesh, and drinking of his blood.*” Here we have the Jewish interpretation distinctly stated; and we afterwards find it as stoutly maintained. This moreover is done, in opposition, not only to common sense and human feeling, but to the general sentiment of his own Church, as well as of the whole Christian world. On principles which we have already canvassed, he decides that the phrases do not admit of figurative meanings; and for reasons which will afterwards appear, he infers that, if the Jews had mistaken their import, our Lord would have corrected them. My conclusion from all this is, that imagination cannot conceive any man more heavily fettered to a particular tenet, than Dr Wiseman here is to the Jewish interpretation. By what means, then, does he render that interpretation subservient to his own purposes? This I shall now endeavour to explain.



The truth appears to be as follows: When Dr Wiseman has fairly persuaded his readers that he is discussing the Jewish interpretation, he contrives—no one sees how or when, but with a dexterity which cannot be too much admired, and a disingenuousness which cannot be too severely reprobated—to substitute—as if it were the same thing—the sacrament of the Eucharist. Now, this sacramental interpretation is *not* the same as the Jewish interpretation. No sane man has yet, I believe, ventured to say that the Jews were thinking of the sacrament. The unwarrantable substitution here pointed out is, apart from all other considerations, absolutely fatal to Dr Wiseman's argument, as conducted by himself; but I hope to render some service, by tracing a few of the consequences flowing from the substitution.

Dr Wiseman holds that the phrases, in the second part of our Lord's discourse, are not susceptible of a figurative interpretation: but Dr Wiseman interprets those phrases of the Eucharist—which *is* a figurative interpretation:—Therefore Dr Wiseman holds contradictory propositions—which cannot both be true. To prove that to interpret those phrases, of the Eucharist, is to interpret them figuratively—although no proof is wanted—I appeal to the Rhemish annotator, as already quoted. He writes of a "sweet sense" as existing in our Lord's "hard, mystical or figurative words"—"to be fulfilled in a sacra-

ment, mystery and a marvellous divine sort." In fact, if the phrases be interpreted of the sacrament, they *cannot but* be interpreted figuratively. The phrases *must* either be understood literally or figuratively. The Jews understood them literally, and assigned to them the only literal meaning the words could possibly bear. For that meaning, no man—not even Dr Wiseman himself—will really contend. The phrases, therefore, *must* be understood figuratively; however people may differ about the import to be attached to them:—some persons explaining them sacramentally—others spiritually—and others again, both sacramentally and spiritually. All these persons, however, adopt a figurative interpretation. It is sad work to have thus to revert to the most elementary considerations; but I have had recourse to the expedient, from an impression, that I might, by such means, the most effectually dispel the darkness, in which Dr Wiseman has contrived to involve the whole subject.

The learned author, as we shall soon see, undertakes to prove, at great length, that if the literal interpretation of the Jews had not been right, it would have been corrected. Why, then, does he not himself adhere to the literal interpretation? Why adopt a figurative interpretation—of which the Jews could not possibly have had the slightest notion? The truth is—he would fain interpret the same phrase literally and figuratively, at the

same time; and thus combine, for his own purposes, the significations peculiar to each method. Now, that is permitted to no one. Dr Wiseman may take his choice between the two methods; but he cannot secure the advantages of them both. Should he decide in favour of the literal interpretation, the phrase cannot be applied to the Eucharist—and the controversy respecting the sixth chapter of St John is at an end. Should he prefer the sacramental interpretation, he must abandon the literal signification of the phrase; which must then be understood figuratively—that is, with reference solely to the sacrament. When an object is to be considered in a figurative sense, there is something so preposterous in the supposition—that the actual, physical properties of that object are thereby transferred to that sense—that I would not beforehand do any one the injustice to believe him capable of holding such an opinion. Yet such an opinion is held by those who apply the latter phrases of our Lord's discourse to the Eucharist—and at the same time maintain, from the same expressions, that the actual flesh is to be eaten in that sacrament. The inference which *ought* to be drawn, by those who interpret that part of the discourse—of the Eucharist, is—that the literal sense, of eating the flesh, is excluded by the mode of interpretation; and that the Eucharistical sense can be decided by those parts of Scripture only, which expressly treat of that sacrament. Let me



illustrate, by an example, what I have now advanced. Our Lord (John iii. 3) said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus being perplexed by the literal meaning of this, our Lord gave him its figurative interpretation: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now, if, in expounding the nature of Baptism, an interpreter were to insist upon the circumstances of the natural birth, instead of considering our Lord's explanation, and those other passages of Scripture in which that sacrament is mentioned—he would not act more absurdly than do those, who, after applying our Lord's expressions, in John vi, to the Eucharist, determine its nature, by means of such expressions.

When Dr Wiseman—whether from some ambition of originality, I know not—determined, in opposition to the most renowned doctors of his own Church, to maintain the correctness of the Jewish interpretation, of the closing expressions in our Lord's discourse—he could scarcely have calculated the consequences of his undertaking. He must have felt that the literal sense was not the sense he really meant to establish; and there was, at least, a possibility that the silent substitution, in the course of the argument, of a meaning not literal, instead of that literal meaning which



he professed to support, might not pass without observation. Yet he does not seem to have made any provision against the contingency. Appearances, at present, are somewhat ridiculous. He had a leaning wall to support; and he has built his buttresses on the wrong side of it. The stronger are his reasonings, in defence of the literal interpretation of the Jews—the more fearfully do they press upon his sacramental interpretation. In fact, through the greater portion of his lectures on this subject, he has exerted himself in adding weight to that which crushes his own hypothesis to atoms. I doubt whether a more surprising instance, of such a mode of proceeding, is to be found in the history of theological literature.

These concluding remarks are of themselves destructive of Dr Wiseman's system; but I shall examine his remaining lectures on the subject, with similar care to that which I have already manifested. His explanations of Scripture furnish instruction of a very peculiar kind; and the reader, I trust, has still some remains of curiosity and patience. But before I proceed to the next lecture, I wish to point out how unwisely, in my opinion, the learned author has deviated from one of the ablest members of his own communion—and I could instance many others—in interpreting the sixth chapter of St John.

Estius—with the sanction, as he says, of Scripture and the fathers—mentions four methods, as

I have already stated, of eating and drinking the body and blood of Christ: that is, (1) carnally, (2) cruelly (crudeliter), (3) sacramentally, and (4) spiritually. The first method has been described... The second method approaches to that which Dr Wiseman has given, as the *only* figurative method. David (Psal. xxvii. 2), according to Estius, prophetically personifying our Saviour, exclaims, "When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell;" also (Psal. xxii. 13) "They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion:"—with reference to the events attending the crucifixion.... The third (sacramental) method relates to the eating and drinking in the Eucharist—where Estius, as a Roman Catholic, of course believes that the real body and blood exist under the appearance of bread and wine.... The fourth (spiritual) method is placed in several points of view; but I will mention only the first two: 1. To be incorporated with the mystical body of Christ, whether by Baptism, the Eucharist, or any other means, is to eat the flesh of Christ and to drink his blood. For this view of the matter, great authorities are quoted; namely, *the sixth chapter of St John*, Augustine, The Master of the Sentences, Gratian, and (in Dr Wiseman's estimation I should think) more than all—Pope Innocent the first... 2. We eat and drink spiritually, through faith in the flesh of Christ consigned to

the cross for us, and in his blood shed for us; which, induced by probable arguments, some think may be proved from our Lord's discourse in John vi. On this subject I cannot but quote the very words of Estius:

• “Secundo autem modo spiritualis manducatio intelligitur quæ fit per fidem in carnem Christi traditam pro nobis in cruce, et sanguinem pro nobis effusum. Quem modum alii probabilibus argumentis moti putant propriè significatum esse a Domino in illo sermone quem habuit Joan. 6. Quem et Augustinus tradit, cum ait in illis verbis, *Nisi manducaveritis*, &c. FIGURAM esse, quâ præcipiatur passioni Domini esse communicandum, et suaviter atque utiliter recondendum in memoriâ, quòd pro nobis caro ejus crucifixa sit et vulnerata.” (In sent. lib. iv. 9. 1. p. 111.)

In a scholar of the Roman Church, we naturally excuse a respect, even if it happens to border upon veneration, for the general voice of antiquity. Now, there are two points, concerning which I should be surprised to find any difference of opinion, amongst fathers, schoolmen and divines, from the age of the Apostles to our own—till Dr Wiseman arose. One is, a belief that the Jewish literal interpretation of our Lord's expressions was wrong; another, that the expressions must be understood figuratively. The learned author appears to me, in this respect, very like a man rowing by himself, in his own small boat, in opposition to a mighty stream; and it is easy to predict the result.

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## PART I. SECTION III.

JEWISH PREJUDICES; AND MODE OF INTERPRETING  
OUR LORD'S DISCOURSE.

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MR BURKE, in one part of his 'Reflections on the Revolution in France,' dwells upon the description of persons who, at the commencement of that terrible crisis, had been elected into the *Tiers Etat*, and the consequences which naturally resulted from such an assembly. However extraordinary the circumstance may appear, my undertaking now requires me to quote Mr Burke's observations on that subject; which are, as usual, full of wisdom. Thus then writes that great man:

" Among them, indeed, I saw some of known rank ; some of shining talents ; but of any practical experience in the state, not one man was to be found. The best were only men of theory. But whatever the distinguished few may have been, it is the substance and mass of the body which constitutes its character, and must finally determine its direction. *In all bodies, those who will lead must also, in a considerable degree, follow. They must conform their propositions to the taste, talent and disposition of those whom they conduct:* therefore, if an assembly is viciously or feebly composed in a very great part of it, nothing but such a supreme degree of virtue as very rarely appears in the world, and for that reason cannot enter into calculation, will prevent the men of talents so disseminated through it from becoming only the expert instruments of absurd projects. If, what is the more likely event, instead of that unusual degree of virtue, they should



be actuated by sinister ambition, and a lust of meretricious glory, then the feeble part of the assembly, to whom at first they conform, becomes in its turn the dupe and instrument of their designs." (Works, 8vo. Vol. v. p. 90.)

With a full recollection of the pledge given, in the preface to this volume, that facts should be strictly adhered to, I have now to demand of the reader his belief in the statement—that Dr Wiseman has actually adopted that portion of the foregoing extract, which is given in *Italics*, as one of his grand principles of interpretation; and in his third lecture, has actually applied it, as the sure guide to our Lord's meaning, in the sixth chapter of St John. And thus are the purposes of the Saviour of the world, and the means employed by him for the accomplishment of his object, to be estimated by the means and purposes to which a political leader may have recourse, with the view of controlling and directing the excited passions of a popular assembly. In truth, it "maketh the heart sick," to think that any one—least of all a minister of Christ's religion—should have so far forgotten his own character, as to have thus ventured to treat the proceedings of Him, "in whom were hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"—and in whom "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." To myself, there is something melancholy in what appears to be too commonly the effect of a determined resolution to maintain a set of theological opinions—I mean, a

certain hardness of disposition, and an insensibility to the propriety or impropriety of the methods adopted for that end. At the time, indeed, that Dr Wiseman adduced the already-mentioned sentiment of Mr Burke—for the purpose of showing that “the feelings, the habits, the very prejudices of the audience addressed” must have been originally consulted by our Lord, and so must now be taken into account—he was aware that the principles he was laying down might assume an odious appearance, and be carried to a dangerous extent. “Of course,” he observes, “you will not for a moment confound this supposition with the doctrine of the rationalists, that our Saviour framed his dogma so as to accord with the errors and prejudices of the Jews—an opinion as *unhermeneutical* and absurd, as it is blasphemous. I speak of the *manner*, and not the *matter*, of his instructions.”\* Now, notwithstanding this limitation, I cannot but think that, if the language of Mr Burke is to be applied to the case—if our Lord is to be considered as one who, because he would “lead, must also in a considerable degree, have followed,” as one who must have “conformed his propositions to the taste, talent and disposition of those whom he wished to conduct”—Dr Wiseman’s opinion, both in the disrespect which it implies and the dangers with which it is fraught, makes a very close approximation to that which he has pro-

\* Lectures, p. 28.

nounced to be “as *unhermeneutical* and absurd, as it is blasphemous.”

But Dr Wiseman does not decide the meaning of our Lord's discourses, by referring solely to the arts of a political leader. He appeals also to the compliances of a successful preacher. “I quoted to you,” he writes, the remark of Burke, that in addressing popular assemblies it is necessary, in some respect, to adapt ourselves to the weaknesses and prejudices of those who hear us. ‘The preacher,’ says an able writer [the author of *The Elements of Rhetoric*] ‘who is intent upon carrying his point, should use all such precautions as are not inconsistent with it, to avoid raising unfavourable impressions in his hearers.’”\*—This appeal, although perhaps not exciting equal indignation with the former, yet betokens the most lamentable indifference to the dignity of the subject under discussion. Strong language is quite foreign to my habits of writing; but I cannot help expressing my surprise, that Dr Wiseman, with all his confidence in “an able writer,” was not ashamed to propose, as the criterion for judging of our Lord and his discourses, “the preacher who is intent upon carrying his point.” A notion like this, if seriously advanced, manifests such a poverty-stricken conception of the objects of our Lord's ministration among men—such a degrading estimate of his conduct, as recorded by the Evangel-

\* Lectures, pp. 85, 86.



ists—that the difficulty is, to reconcile its appearance, with those moral feelings and religious impressions which we are anxious to attribute to the reverend lecturer. But let us proceed to the application, as explained by himself, of his *hermeneutical* principles :

(1) “ Our Saviour’s object, in his discourses to the Jews, was to gain them over to the doctrines of Christianity ; and he, therefore, must be supposed to propose those doctrines in the manner most likely to gain their attention and conciliate their esteem. (2) At least, it is repugnant to suppose him selecting the most revolting images, wherein to clothe his dogmas, disguising his most amiable institutions under the semblance of things the most wicked and abominable in the opinion of his hearers, and inculcating the most saving and most beautiful principles, by the most impious and horrible illustrations. (3) Yet, in such manner must we consider him to have acted, if we deny him to have been teaching the doctrine of the real presence, and suppose him to have been simply inculcating the doctrine of faith. (4) For, the ideas of *drinking blood* and *eating human flesh*, presented something so frightful to a Jew, that we cannot allow our Saviour, if a sincere teacher, to have used them as images for consoling and cheering doctrines ; nor, in fact, to have used them at all, under any other circumstances than an absolute necessity of recurring to them, as the most literal method of representing his doctrines.” (pp. 86, 87.)

The preceding extract contains four sentences ; on each of which, in its order, I will make a few observations. 1. If we may judge from our Lord’s own proceeding, he must have frequently had some other object, besides that mentioned by Dr Wiseman—namely, that of “gaining the attention of the Jews, and conciliating their esteem.” When,



for instance, he declared, in the presence of “an innumerable multitude of people,” (Luke xii. 1) as well as of his disciples, (Luke xii. 49) that he was “come to send fire on the earth”—when he went on to say, “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law:”—when (Luke xiv. 25) he turned to “great multitudes” who “went with him,” and said unto them, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple;” and advised them before they resolved to “bear his cross,” to follow the example of the man who, before engaging in some great undertaking, “sitteth down, and counteth the cost:”—when such, I say, was, in various instances, the tenor of our Lord’s addresses to the people, is it to be endured, that we are to consider him in the light of a leader of a party, “conforming his propositions to the taste, talent and disposition” of his audience—or even in the light of a popular preacher, “using precautions, to avoid raising unfavourable impres-

sions," in order that he may "carry his point?" The truth of the matter is as clear as the day. No *reasoning* is requisite, to show how incompatible are Dr Wiseman's notions, with the circumstances of the case—how mean his views, compared with the moral grandeur of our Lord's proceedings. But the discrepancies, between Dr Wiseman's conceptions of things and the corresponding realities, would be of no consequence to the world, if they were not employed as principles of interpreting the Sacred Volume. In this way, they become the origin of gross and pernicious mistakes. The learned author would apply his scheme, "of engaging the attention of the Jews, and conciliating their esteem," to the discourse recorded in the 6th chapter of St John. Before he can be allowed to do that, however, he must show, what the whole narrative contradicts, that the conduct and disposition, of the multitude collected on that occasion, was such as to call forth that patient endurance of involuntary error, and those persevering endeavours to remove it, which were, in some other cases, manifested towards human weakness...2. With regard to the second sentence of the preceding extract, I remark that the consciousness of being liable to error ought to have restrained any man, when approaching that subject, from the use of such expressions as we there find. If a prize were to be awarded to that writer, who should employ the most gross and offensive terms, in describing

our Lord's discourses, Dr Wiseman's second sentence could scarcely fail to ensure success....3. On the third sentence, I shall say but little. In what way, "teaching the doctrine of the real presence" can avert the force of Dr Wiseman's reproaches, more effectually than "teaching the doctrine of faith," does not appear. There is something quite shocking, in the attempt to make a man's own interpretation—an interpretation founded on notions which have been actually shown to be incontrovertibly erroneous—the only means of removing reproaches of such a nature from our Lord's character as displayed in his method of announcing the kingdom of heaven. 4. The fourth sentence is justly liable to similar animadversions. In affirming that "*we cannot allow* our Redeemer, if a sincere teacher, to have used such images for consoling and cheering doctrines"—and in describing him as under "*an absolute necessity* of recurring" to the language so strongly reprobated, if his intention was to inculcate the doctrine of the real presence—Dr Wiseman manifests a style of thinking and of writing in the highest degree presumptuous on the part of mortal man—with regard to his Lord and Saviour. Does he, moreover, mean to say that the doctrine of the Eucharist, as held by himself, is not "consoling and cheering;" or does he mean to contend that the spiritual views of the discourse taken by Protestants, although "consoling and cheering," are not at the same time among the most grave



and affecting that can be conceived? Upon that discourse, especially the latter part of it, there is impressed a character of peculiar solemnity. When our Lord spoke of his flesh, as what he would give for the life of the world, he undoubtedly alluded to his passion; and this portion of the discourse appears to involve considerations so awful, that the writer, of such comments as we are now reviewing, might justly have recoiled with alarm, at the sight of what had escaped his pen.

From these general statements, however, the learned lecturer proceeds to prove, at considerable length, that drinking blood, even that of animals allowed for food, was to the Jews forbidden, as a crime; and that feeding upon human flesh and blood is mentioned in Scripture as the last and most dreadful curse that could be inflicted on the human race. He then reverts to his former positions;—alleging the unreasonableness of the opinion, that our Lord, “anxious to draw them all to himself, should have clothed doctrines, no ways repulsive, under imagery drawn from such an odious source”—so odious, that the revolting metaphor, of “slaying or murdering the Son of man, would,” in his estimation, “have been equally appropriate, or much more so;”—deciding, as before, that “nothing but the absolute necessity, of using such phrases, could justify the recurrence to them”—that the necessity arose from those phrases affording “the most simple way of conveying” the Roman Catholic



doctrine of the Eucharist, while “a thousand other metaphors were at hand,” to convey “any other doctrine”—and therefore, finally, that the actual body and blood of Christ are present in that Sacrament\*.

The conclusions drawn by Dr Wiseman, from the premises contained in the first sentence of the preceding paragraph, are amongst the most rash and irreverent that are to be found in theological controversy...Our Lord had, from the first, been speaking of spiritual sustenance, under the similitude of bread—calling it the bread of life. When he afterwards connected this bread with his flesh—and identified the receiving of it with the partaking of his flesh and blood—with eating him—and finally (v. 58), as if to prevent the possibility of mistake, reverted to the bread which had all along been the subject of discourse—we are enabled to perceive an unbroken train of thought. According to the views of Dr Wiseman—who, in spite of the powerful cord by which the whole is bound together, would dis sever the latter part of the discourse from the former—the revolting metaphor, of “slaying or murdering the Son of man would have been equally appropriate or more so;” while those, who are content to take the discourse as they find it, feel the insinuation to be repelled by the whole constitution of their nature—by every intellectual perception and every moral feeling. Again, to maintain, with Dr Wiseman, that “no-

\* Lectures, pp. 87—90.

thing could justify" our Saviour, in adopting the phrases he actually employed, but the explanation which he, Dr Wiseman, has thought proper to give—and that, assuming the truth of such an explanation, there was "an absolute necessity of using those phrases"—indicates to my mind, and I write under the sense of duty both to God and man, a determination to use language which, I verily believe, is unparalleled, except among those who are labouring to throw contempt upon every thing sacred. Dr Wiseman is not content with having once avowed such sentiments; nor will I be content with having once animadverted upon them. What, after all, must be the kind of understanding which can lead a man to suppose that the terms, employed in the latter part of the discourse, afford the only way, or even "the most simple way," of announcing the future institution of the Eucharistical rite?

As a supplement to this part of his investigation, Dr Wiseman takes notice of the objection to his "line of reasoning," arising from the fact of our Lord having, in other instances, "clothed his lessons in figures almost equally odious to his hearers." Some of these representations I have (p. 110) already specified. Dr Wiseman instances that of *carrying the cross* (Matt. x. 38). The cases, he replies, are not parallel. "To carry the cross might be ignominious—odious;"—but "to eat blood was considered essentially wicked." A tendency to such remarks may be observed in various parts of

the lectures; but I shall take this one occasion of offering all that I think needful on the point. Whatever difficulty, then, Dr Wiseman may attribute to the notion of eating blood—it presses much more grievously on his own account of the matter, than on that of Protestants. According to Dr Wiseman’s interpretation, our Lord, in the latter part of the discourse, introduced the eating and drinking of flesh and blood, as a totally new subject—which he (Dr W.) understands sacramentally, but which, although the Jews certainly understood it in the grossest possible sense, was left without explanation:—according to the Protestant interpretation, the figurative, the spiritual signification of the expression was inculcated by our Lord himself—so that persons of less carnal minds, than his hearers manifestly were, might, without farther elucidation, have understood the meaning. And now, I will leave the reader to decide which of these two views of the discourse is the more worthy of our Lord’s character, as a divine instructor.... To the instance of *carrying the cross* he also replies: “I have never said that our Saviour was bound to soften his *doctrines* in teaching them to the Jews, only that he could not consistently render repulsive by his *expressions* such as were not so in themselves;”—and then argues as follows: “The doctrine of mortification is necessarily harsh and painful”—and so, is properly represented by *carrying the cross*; while “of all the principles of



Christianity, faith in the death of its Divine Author and Finisher, is considered by Protestants as the most cheering and most delightful"—and so is *not* properly represented by the expressions in the latter part of the discourse\*. We willingly accept this description of the Protestant doctrine of faith in the death of Christ; to which, according to the learned lecturer, our Lord's phrases are too harsh to be applied. We conclude also that, in his opinion, the Roman Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist must present every thing that is terrible and repulsive to human nature; corresponding to "the revolting-images" by which it is set forth. Contradictory to the testimony of the senses we previously knew that it was; and we are now informed that it is directly opposed to the best feelings of the heart.

The reader may probably recollect an expression of Dr Wiseman's lately adduced (p. 113), respecting our Lord's "anxiety to draw them all to himself." This leads to a more exact statement, than I have yet given, of the circumstances which attended the discourse recorded in John vi. Something like a clear apprehension of those circumstances will be of great importance, throughout the whole of this part of our enquiry.

After the miracle at Cana, our Lord sojourned at Capernaum, for a few days, before he went to keep his first Passover at Jerusalem. On his

\* Lectures, p. 94.



return from Judæa into Galilee, he made Capernaum his chief place of residence ; which it continued to be, during the whole of his ministry—inso much that it is mentioned (Matt. ix. 1) “as his own city.” There he began and continued to proclaim the things appertaining to the kingdom of heaven. Very near that place, he addressed to the people the sermon on the mount. In Capernaum, and the neighbouring towns, and the whole district adjoining the lake of Gennesaret, he delivered some of the most remarkable of his discourses, and performed some of the most striking of his miracles. In fact, it was in his progresses through that region, and above all during his abode at Capernaum, that the evidences of his divine mission were the most signally displayed. And what was the result? A few of the people, who witnessed those wonders, appear to have been duly impressed by what they heard and saw ; but from the generality, our Lord met with little besides opposition and rebuke. They attributed the most glorious and beneficent miracles to an unhallowed compact with the powers of darkness and malignity ; and surrounded, as it were, with the tokens that God was with him, they still clamoured for a sign from heaven. So hardened, indeed, were the people of that place, against all the mercies vouchsafed to them, that our Lord appears to have more than once denounced against Capernaum, greater calamities, if possible, than those impending over the

not far distant towns of Chorazin and Bethsaida. How ominous is the language he employed! "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgement, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgement, than for thee." (Matt. xi. 20—24). There is such a thing as a determined rejection of what is known and felt to be the truth; and assuredly it must have been a principle of that kind, which called forth these fearful denunciations. Capernaum, however, possessed its Scribes and Pharisees—its men of leisure and intelligence; and, what is very remarkable, we find our Lord, immediately after the preceding denunciations, contrasting the self-sufficient despisers of his words, with his own lowly and unpretending disciples: "At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things

from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." If, moreover, we bear in mind the sad consequences thus annexed to the neglect and abuse of high privileges, we may easily understand some declarations, the true import of which we might otherwise mistake. Not long after the denunciations already recited, we find our Lord addressing the people of the same region, in parables. I again have recourse to the Gospel History; for no other language can be so impressive. "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But



blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (Matt. xiii. 10—16.) By thus unfolding the divine dispensations with regard to that untoward generation, our Lord has not only left admonitions of the greatest moment to all—but given us a clue to his purposes in addressing the people, and a key to treasures which we might not otherwise secure. He foresaw that his personal ministry would be in a great measure unavailing; and we shall read many portions of the Gospels to but little advantage, unless we take that matter into account; and consider much that occurred as done with a view to the establishment of the Apostles' faith—to their preparation for future labours, and for recording the things which were to be "brought to their remembrance." When doctrines opposed to Jewish prejudices, and grievous to human nature, were openly inculcated, we can conceive that the effect might be, to produce, upon the minds of the disciples, a practical conviction that their destination in this world was, to encounter much that would be difficult for them to endure. This at least appears to have been one method, amongst many others, by which the disciples were trained for the great work of promulgating the Gospel, when they should be deprived of the personal presence of their Lord. Other important objects, of which we can probably form no conception, our Saviour may have had, in the discourses addressed to the people of Caper-



naum and the towns of that region. Here, however, is a principle of interpreting the Gospels, deduced from the Gospels themselves, and of extensive application. By means of this principle, much in them that may appear "crooked will be made straight," and many of "the rough places plain;" and if any of my readers, when studying those sacred records, should be induced to give special heed to the subject thus laid before them, I shall be satisfied that, in writing this book, I have done good.

Who, after what has now been stated, can reflect, with any degree of patience, on Dr Wiseman's scheme of estimating our Lord's conduct by that of a political leader, "conforming his propositions to the taste, talent and disposition, of those whom he wishes to conduct"—or even by that of a popular preacher, "intent on carrying his point?" This scheme was contrived with the design of supporting certain doctrines; but apart from all consideration of doctrines, I have felt it to be my bounden duty, to expose the weakness of the attempt, to degrade, in that manner, the character of the Redeemer of the world.

But to proceed: the discourse, contained in the sixth chapter of St John, was addressed to the people of Capernaum. Notwithstanding the general insensibility to his "mighty acts," and the aversion to his doctrines, there were many ways in which those proofs of his having come

from God could not but turn to the benefit of mankind. Our Lord, therefore, pursued the course marked out by divine wisdom. He still wrought miracles in behalf of those who, in their affliction, sought his aid; but to the multitudes who arrogantly called for a sign from heaven, he declared that no such sign, as they required, should be conceded to them\*. He adhered to his plan of speaking to them in parables—explaining as little or as much as he thought fit. On one occasion, a large concourse of people being with him, without food, he took the opportunity to afford them a miraculous supply. There was, in this, something different from what they had before experienced. An individual, healed of his disorder, felt a relief, which others did not feel; but when five thousand persons were fed at once, the benefit was common to them all. The consequence was, that, for a time at least, a temper seems to have prevailed amongst them, leading to the acknowledgment of his divine mission. “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.” The real nature of their views, however, appears from this, that they would “have come and taken him by force, to make him a king.” In this purpose they were frustrated; but on the day after that of the miracle, a multitude, consisting mainly of those who had

\* Matt. xii. 38, 39; also Luke xi. 29.

been present on the occasion, found Jesus at Capernaum. Now, with regard to the hardened disposition of the inhabitants of those parts, we can make no mistake—for it has been described by our Lord himself; and although a few might be found, in the multitude then assembled, who were inclined to think favourably of his cause, yet his reproach, that “they sought him, not because they had seen the miracles, but because they had eaten of the loaves and were filled,” affords a sufficient proof that the general character of the crowd was that which belonged to the people of the district. Our next object is, to trace, in the narrative of St John, the actual conduct of those who were present at our Lord’s discourse—in order that we may ascertain how far it accords, with what might have been expected, from persons such as they are represented to have been.

In the outset of the conference, the people, hoping for a repetition of the miracle, seem to have treated our Lord with some respect. When he advised them (v. 27) to “work not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life”—they asked “What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?”—the import of which will much depend upon the manner in which the question was proposed; but I will take it in the best sense, and suppose that a serious meaning was attached to it. “Jesus answered and said unto them, This



is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." No sooner had our Lord mentioned believing in himself, as "the work" which was demanded of them, than their perverseness returned in all its virulence; and, in spite of the declarations they had received that, to "an evil and adulterous generation, that sought after a sign, there should no sign be given, but the sign of the prophet Jonas," they asked him, "What sign showest thou then, that we may see and believe thee? what dost thou work?" In this case, however, they explain the kind of sign which would satisfy them. "Our fathers," they went on to observe, "did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat:"—thus expressing the condition, as it were, on which they would believe on him; namely, that he should supply them with "bread from heaven," as well at least as Moses had supplied their forefathers in the desert. Our Lord, availing himself of the expression "bread from heaven," proceeded, as his custom was, to convey his instructions in parables—that is, in figurative language; and so spoke of the "true bread from heaven," by which, *we know*, he meant himself and his doctrines. The people, however, manifestly mistook what was thus expressed; supposing that something of greater value than the manna of Moses was intended, although it was material food; and said unto Jesus, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." Our Lord then went



on to describe HIMSELF as “the bread of life;” reverted to their unbelief, respecting which he had at the first admonished them; declared that he had “come down from heaven”—and that every one who believed on him should have everlasting life. All this the people put together in their own way; superadding, as they did so, their own proud and carnal conceptions on the subject. They were indignant that *he*, “whose father and mother they knew,” should represent himself as “the bread which came down from heaven.” Our Lord, after giving them to understand that those who raised objections of that kind were not the persons destined to derive advantage from his instructions, again alluded to the manna provided in the wilderness; re-asserted that HE was “the bread of life;” and declared moreover that the bread which he would give was “*his flesh*, which he would give for the life of the world.” To the people of Capernaum, still intent upon a sign from heaven, after the example of the manna in the wilderness, this language was destruction to every hope they had entertained; and with evident bitterness of feeling, they murmured, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Regardless of this “contradiction of sinners” (Heb. xii. 3), our Lord repeated the obnoxious sentiment, with yet greater emphasis; but he closed not his discourse without a clear indication, to those who “had ears to hear,” that he was still speaking of that “bread of life,” which

it had throughout been his object to recommend. "This," he concluded, "is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."...Even if we were to read the chapter, containing the discourse, without the slightest previous knowledge of the people there addressed, I think it would be impossible not to perceive, that the multitude had come together with unreasonable expectations; and that their remarks, on what was said, were dictated by a spirit of dissatisfaction and cavil. When, however, we find the persons then present, forming part of a people to the last degree gross of apprehension, untoward in disposition and hardened against the most astonishing manifestations of divine agency—when we find our Lord, according to his avowed determination with regard to them, adopting highly figurative language—and when we find those persons, with lamentable consistency of character, persevering in their misapprehension and misrepresentation of his declarations—we are at a loss to imagine what must be the mental and moral constitution of any one, who can employ the conceptions of those, who thus appear to have become judicially blinded, as evidences for the meaning of his expressions. In fine, from the people of Capernaum—concerning whom the most terrible judgment was pronounced—Dr Wiseman has supposed a multitude, impressed with "wonder, admi-

ration and reverence" to have been collected—and to have had such correct discernment as to have rightly understood the first part of our Lord's discourse in a spiritual sense, and the latter part no less rightly in a literal sense; so that we are, in consequence, obliged to admit the certainty of such deductions as best suit the purposes of the Roman Catholic Church! To be candid, I consider the preceding statement of facts, relating to the discourse, as a complete refutation of every thing that Dr Wiseman has advanced on the subject. I was led, however, to lay the statement before the reader, not merely because it at once disposed of Dr Wiseman's argument, but also because I wished to show the importance of taking situations and circumstances fairly into account, before we venture to decide positively, or write confidently, on the meaning of passages of Scripture.

So much for Dr Wiseman's notion, that, in the discourse under consideration, our Lord accommodated his language to the prejudices of the people; on the strength of which notion, the learned author has been bold enough, as we have seen, to declare that *nothing can justify* the obnoxious phrases made use of, but his own hypothesis; thus adopting, in treating of a particular portion of the divine dispensations, a mode of expression, which (to the credit of the Natural Philosophers be it spoken) would be scornfully rejected, if coming from any one, who was affecting to account for



some seeming anomaly in the material world. Moreover, it cannot be too strongly impressed upon the reader's mind that, when Dr Wiseman ventures to maintain *the absolute necessity* of certain of our Lord's phrases, if used at all, being used in the sense which he, Dr Wiseman, has thought proper to affix to them—and to affirm that "*we cannot allow* our Saviour, if a sincere teacher," to have availed himself of certain representations, unless in the meaning which he, Dr Wiseman, has taken upon him to assign—he is still farther intruding upon ground interdicted to human foot—upon which I scarcely recollect a single individual, who has before had the hardihood to take his stand. The truth is, that, even supposing the phrases alluded to harsher than they are asserted to be, and less susceptible than they really are of a figurative interpretation, altogether worthy of our Lord's object in sojourning amongst men, we should have this alternative—whether to abide by the difficulty as we find it—or adopt a solution deduced from a series of misrepresentations, to which, in the whole range of theological literature, it would not be easy to find a parallel. In this interpretation of John vi, Dr Wiseman, as will hereafter appear, can scarcely be said to be backed by the authority of the Roman Church; and thus he has little to rely upon, in the matter, but the strength of his own reasoning. That strength has now been tried; and no one, I think, can fail to



perceive how unequal it is to support an explanation obviously contrived to enforce the doctrine of the Real Presence;—a doctrine at variance with many passages of Scripture; and opposed to the testimony of those senses, upon which Christianity itself, as founded on miracles, must depend, for reception amongst men.

The time is now come to advert to Dr Wiseman's "*third, and most important*, proof of the Real Presence drawn from the sixth chapter of St John." This proof is derived from the meaning, given by the Jews, to our Lord's expressions. "We have," observes the learned writer, "the direct testimony of those addressed to how they understood our Saviour, and we have his warrant for the correctness of their interpretation." The argument is of the following kind: When our Lord, in the early part of his discourse, mentioned the bread of life, the Jews at first understood him literally, and so mistook his meaning. He, in that case, dwelt upon the spiritual import of his expressions; and thus, in Dr Wiseman's opinion, which has been shown to be erroneous, *convinced* them that the term *bread* was to be understood, figuratively, of himself and his doctrine. In the latter part of the discourse, when our Lord enforced the necessity of eating *his flesh*, the Jews again understood him literally; and as he did not, in this instance, point out any mistake, we are bound, as Dr Wise-

man conceives, to conclude that their interpretation was correct. Now, admitting for a moment the soundness of these principles, it is enough to remark, as I have before intimated, that if the Jews were right, in understanding *literally*, the eating of the flesh and the drinking of the blood—then must Dr Wiseman be wrong, in referring the whole to the Eucharist. He will not maintain that the Jews thought of the Eucharist; and, with all his confidence in the doctrine of Transubstantiation, he will not pretend that the literal eating and drinking of the Jews, and his own sacramental eating and drinking, are the same thing. All reasoning therefore, from our Lord's silence as to any mistake in the matter, is as strongly opposed to Dr Wiseman's views, as to a figurative sense; and my conclusion is, that, so far as his own cause is concerned, he has not acted very judiciously in laying stress upon the fact that the Jewish interpretation was left without animadversion.... This, as I have said, is enough to remark, supposing Dr Wiseman's principle to be admitted. The argument, however, has, in reality, nothing to rest upon, except his own strange and deplorable disregard of the relation in which our Lord was placed, with respect to the people of that region. His miracles they had assigned to co-operation with the evil spirit; they had resisted his instructions; they had despised his reproof. They were, in consequence, left, for the most part, to themselves—

as a people by their own misconduct doomed to destruction. Our Lord's public discourses were in a strain beyond the comprehension of persons so depraved as they had shown themselves to be; but still affording the means, of advancement in religion, to those who were more tractable—and especially to his disciples, through whom the advantages, to be derived from his communications, were to be extended to the world at large. And thus, before we can suppose, with Dr Wiseman, that our Lord, when delivering the discourse under review, intended to remove all grounds of dissatisfaction and cavil, we must be content to obliterate, from our minds, the whole history of his abode at Capernaum. But without supposing anything of the kind, one good effect of the proceeding, as *we* understand it, is apparent—namely, the trial to which it gave occasion, of the Apostles' faith. When "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him," Jesus said unto *the twelve*, "Will ye also go away?" The answer was, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

After what has now been stated, I cannot believe that any reader will attach the slightest importance to the sense given, by the people of Capernaum, to our Lord's discourse. But as Dr Wiseman maintains that they were right in their literal interpretation of the latter part—as he



makes that point “the hinge of the question between the two religions”—and as he “entreats the most earnest attention” to the arguments by which he goes on to establish the point—I should be sorry to deprive him of an opportunity to make the best of his cause. His notion, then, is, that if the people had erred in taking the latter part of the discourse literally, our Lord would have told them so; and to prove this, he appeals to various discourses, recorded in the Gospels—first, the cases in which “the audience was wrong”—and then those in which “it was right”—concluding, from our Lord’s proceedings in such cases, that there is sufficient warrant for the inference intended to be drawn. The first class of instances is thus entered upon:

“I say then that whenever our Lord’s hearers found difficulties, or raised objections to his words, from taking them in their literal sense, while he intended them to be taken figuratively, his constant practice was to explain them instantly, in a figurative manner, even though no great error should result from their being misunderstood. The first example, which I shall give, is a well-known conversation between our Saviour and Nicodemus, (John iii. 3—5.) ‘Jesus answered and said unto him, Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be *born again*, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.’ This expression was one in ordinary use among the Jewish doctors, to express proselytism. Nicodemus, whether from wilfulness or error, took the words in their literal import, and made an objection precisely similar in form to that of the Jews: ‘How *can* a man be born when he is old?’ Our Saviour instantly explains the words in their figurative meaning to him, by repeating them with such a modification as could leave no farther doubt of the sense in



which he spoke them. ‘Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of *water* and the *Holy Ghost*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’” (pp. 95, 96.)

The great difference between “the audience,” in the cases of John vi. and John iii, might, I should have thought, have appeared, even to Dr Wiseman himself, sufficiently inimical to his own views. On the one hand, we have a multitude at Capernaum, forming part of a people notorious for their opposition to the truth, seeking HIM by whom they had been miraculously fed, and expecting a repetition of the benefit. They were thwarted in their object; and thus, both by general disposition and immediate disappointment, were urged to find fault with every thing that was uttered. On the other hand, we have “a man of the Pharisees” at Jerusalem—“a ruler of the Jews”—one whom, from some intimations in the Gospels, we cannot but believe to have been a person of benevolence and integrity, and an honest inquirer after the way of righteousness. Struck with the miracles which had been performed, he comes voluntarily to Jesus: “by night,” it is true; but still, doing that which, we may be confident, no other “master of Israel” ever had either the inclination or the courage to do... Here then are the two “audiences,” if they are so to be called. Is it probable that our Lord would treat them in the same manner? Would such a proceeding be consonant with what we know of his conduct in other instances—or with Dr Wise-

man's own notion of the difference to be made between "those who are hearkening in order to learn, and those who are listening only to find fault?"\* On the one hand, are we surprised that, after vainly endeavouring to raise the minds of the Galilean multitude to the objects appertaining to life eternal, our Saviour should have abruptly left them, still pertinaciously clinging to their own carnal views of things? On the other hand, are we surprised to find him kindly removing the difficulties felt by the "the master of Israel;" and then complacently instructing him in the spiritual nature of the dispensation about to be established—so, indeed, as to lead one to suppose that our Lord deemed his visitor "not far from the kingdom of God?" These observations are not thrown out, for the mere purpose of meeting an argument. An argument, like this of Dr Wiseman, is too feeble for opposition. To use the language of Scripture, it would be "crushed before the moth." My main object is to vindicate the character of the sacred writings—to place our Saviour's dealings with men in their true light. By the ingenious contrivances of Dr Wiseman, his readers behold the events, recorded in the Gospels, through a medium which causes every thing about them to look poor and distorted. Let the means of deception be removed, and the whole will resume its natural dignity and just proportions.

\* Lectures, p. 29.

But some remarks are yet due to the learned author's account of the conference with Nicodemus. That account, if I mistake not its merits, is in several respects a master-piece of address. On referring to the beginning of the last extract from the Lectures, we find Dr Wiseman introducing the subject with this assertion—namely, “that whenever our Lord's hearers found difficulties, or raised objections to his words, from taking them in their literal sense, while he intended them to be taken figuratively, his constant practice was to explain them instantly, in a figurative manner.” As an example of this practice, Dr Wiseman adduces the case of Nicodemus; to whom, when perplexed by the literal meaning of the admonition addressed to him, our Lord explained its figurative import—just, I suppose, as when he taught the people of Capernaum, that *bread from heaven* signified *his doctrines*. The learned author seems to wonder that the phrase “to be born again,” was not familiar, to a man in the station of Nicodemus, as being “in ordinary use among the Jewish doctors, to express proselytism.” According to this explanation, *to be born again*, in its intended metaphorical sense, was *to become a proselyte*. When Dr Wiseman thus glossed over the passage under consideration, he probably did not feel the danger of his position. In the second canon of the Council of Trent, *On Baptism*, a curse is pronounced upon the man who shall turn

our Lord's words, *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit*, into any kind of metaphor.\* The thunder of the Vatican has been heard to roll, when the appearance of heresy was less than that here presented. But the learned lecturer is quite safe. He found it, I have no doubt, convenient *not* to mention *Baptism*, on that occasion; and I cannot sufficiently admire the dexterity with which he has constructed a paragraph, which may be shown to mean any thing or nothing, as circumstances may demand.

The reader will probably have been beforehand with me, in divining the cause of Dr Wiseman's reluctance to mention *Baptism*, when thus discussing the figurative meanings attached to literal expressions; but I will, at all events, state my opinion on the subject. Let us suppose then, with Dr Wiseman, that our Lord would have rectified the misapprehensions of the Jews as readily as those of Nicodemus. The learned author will allow that our Lord interpreted, of the sacrament of *Baptism*, that which Nicodemus understood in the most literal sense possible. The learned author will also allow that he (Dr W.) interprets, of the sacrament of the Eucharist, that which *the*

\* "Si quis dixerit, aquam veram et naturalem non esse de necessitate Baptismi, atque adeò verba illa Domini nostri Jesu Christi, 'Nisi quis renatus fuerit ex aquâ et Spiritu Sancto,' ad metaphoram aliquam detorserit, anathema esto." Sess. vii. can. 2. de Baptismo...Dr Wiseman has, in other instances, applied the passage to *Baptism*. I only mean to say that he seems studiously to have avoided the term *Baptism*, in the case before us.



*Jews* understood in the most literal sense possible. Since therefore, according to his own remark, our Lord repeated the words to Nicodemus, “with such a modification as could leave no farther doubt of the sense in which he spoke them”—beyond all dispute, his own avowed principles require, for the establishment of his own doctrine, that our Lord should have repeated his words to the Jews, “with such modification as could leave no doubt of the sense in which he spoke them.” It will demand a much abler controversialist than I take Dr Wiseman to be, although I by no means question his ability, to get rid of this argument, drawn from his own premises. With regard to the discourse in John vi—on supposition that our Lord *intended* to solve difficulties, the truth is this: Assuming that our Lord referred to a spiritual eating and drinking—whether generally, or sacramentally, or both—the whole of his discourse is consistent with itself; and we are at no loss to imagine why he should not have deigned to give any farther explanation:—while assuming that our Lord referred to the carnal eating and drinking of his flesh and blood in the Eucharist—an entirely new subject—and the want of additional explanation involves us in the utmost perplexity.

I now proceed to Dr Wiseman’s remaining cases, in elucidation of our Lord’s conduct towards the Jews, when they *erred* in too literal an in-

terpretation of his sayings. Those cases, indeed, form a series of the most wretched arguments I ever recollect to have seen employed by a man of talent and information. How could he bear the thought of maintaining a cause which required their support? Fain would I pass them over without notice; but my plan forbids the omission; and, after what I have stated, I must produce them—in rapid succession, the reader may be assured—if it be only to show that I have not judged harshly of their value.

On referring to Matt. xvi. 6, we find that Jesus said to his disciples, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread." Our Lord perceived their error; and after touching upon the deficiency of their faith and the slowness of their understanding, he showed that the admonition required them to "beware of *the doctrine* of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Such is the alleged parallel to John vi. Not to mention the dissimilarity of the cases in other respects, did Dr Wiseman not know, or did he forget, or did he disregard, this evident fact—namely, that our Lord was in the habit of teaching *his disciples* many things which he did not teach the people at large? Does it, in the learned author's estimation, make no difference, whether our Saviour was addressing a perverse multitude, or conversing

with a few dull (peradventure) but still affectionate and attentive disciples. The difficulty is, to conceive how Dr Wiseman could possibly induce himself to bring the two cases into comparison. But we find from Luke xii. 1, as he fails not to remind us, that, on another occasion, our Lord began a discourse with these words, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."... "Our Divine Master," observes Dr Wiseman, "wished to employ *before the crowds* the same figure [leaven] as we have just heard; but he had perceived that it was not easily understood, and he therefore adds the explanation [hypocrisy]." Now, as if there were some spell, over the mind of this learned lecturer, which left his faculties no power but to mislead—what we actually read is, that our Lord "*began to say unto his disciples first of all*, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." So that the opening of the discourse was not in the least addressed to *the crowds*. In what can such misrepresentations originate? In mere hallucination? or in the idea that a controversial writer is released from all moral obligation to state the truth?—as if the relative duties of the writer and the reader were—on the one side to practise deceit, and on the other to detect it.

Dr Wiseman really seems to have some notion that an explanation afforded to the disciples is not quite of the same importance to his argument, as an explanation to the multitudes would be;

and so, as we have seen, would gladly transfer to the latter what was addressed solely to the former. He nevertheless does not scruple to adduce the illustrations, given, even according to his own representation, to the disciples—in proof that it was our Lord's custom, to rectify the mistakes of those who, for whatever purpose, were brought together. Of such proceeding he gives the following examples:—In John iv, we find our Lord at the well near the city of Sychar. The disciples, having returned with food from the city, to the well where they had left him, prayed him to eat. He replied, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of.” This being misunderstood by the disciples, he continued, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”...Again, John xi. furnishes what is called “a similar instance, and important, because our Saviour is not even engaged in doctrinal matters.” Our Lord having said to his disciples “Lazarus sleepeth,” afterwards “said plainly to them, Lazarus is dead.”...Moreover, in Matt. xix, our Lord having assimilated the difficulty, of a rich man being saved, to that of a camel passing through the eye of a needle—he explains the matter to his disciples, by saying, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” I will not pay the reader so ill a compliment as to suppose that he does not clearly perceive the entire want of connexion between these cases and the one designed to be



elucidated. Our Lord kindly removed the involuntary misapprehensions of his disciples; therefore he must also have obviated the perverse objections of the people of Capernaum:—such is the nature of Dr Wiseman's reasoning.

We have now to consider three instances of our Lord's mode of proceeding, when addressing the Pharisees and numbers of the people, in the Temple at Jerusalem. The eighth chapter of St John, whence the instances are taken, presents a most remarkable specimen of perverseness, on the part of the Jews, towards our Lord. Every expression of his, that could by possibility be tortured into something offensive to himself, was eagerly caught up as it fell from his lips, and hurled back at him with indescribable malignity. The language employed is of the following description:—"Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true"—"Where is thy father?"—"Will he kill himself, because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come?"—"Who art thou?"—"We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?"—"Abraham is our father"—"We be not born of fornication"—"Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"—"Now we know that thou hast a devil"—"Art thou greater than our father Abraham—whom makest thou thyself?"—"Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Such was the manner

in which our Lord was assailed. The conclusion was, that "they took up stones to cast at him." To those virulent reproaches our Lord, as every one must be aware, replied with great dignity, but at the same time with merited severity of rebuke. His object plainly was, to repel their insinuations, and show them their ignorance of his character and purposes. When, therefore, Dr Wiseman mentions the eighth chapter of St John as "a striking proof, that even when malice and perverseness were the sources of misinterpretation, our Lord was not to be wearied out by its repeated occurrence, but undeviatingly adhered to this mild, prudent, and conciliating rule, of ever correcting the misapprehensions of his audience\*"—he seems to mistake most completely the character of the discourse there detailed. But let us consider the instances selected by the learned author:

"John viii. 21. Jesus said, 'Whither I go you cannot come.' The Jews took his words in a gross material sense; and asked, 'Will he kill himself, because he said, Whither I go you cannot come?' Jesus, with the greatest meekness, removes this absurd interpretation of his words: 'You are from beneath, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.'" (p. 98.)

The instance just cited affords an opportunity of showing how little Dr Wiseman appears to have understood the nature of our Lord's replies to the Jews, on the occasion adverted to. We read (John vii. 32) that while our Lord was teaching in

\* Lectures, p. 100.

the temple, "the Pharisees and the Chief Priests sent officers to take him." The Evangelist himself shall describe the consequences: "Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come." Now according to the rule to which, as Dr Wiseman informs us, our Lord "undeviatingly adhered," we ought to find an explanation of this difficulty felt by the Jews; but of any explanation we cannot discover the slightest traces. On the contrary, we read in the subsequent verse: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."...In John viii. 22, as mentioned by Dr Wiseman, the Jews felt the same difficulty—"Will he kill himself, because he said, Whither I go, ye cannot come." If there are those who can believe that the Jews understood our Lord's answer on this occasion, they must be persons who not only believe much on little evidence—but, as we shall soon see, against evidence. No one will venture to affirm that the Jews understood that

which the disciples did not understand. Let us, then, turn to John xiii. 33. We there find our Lord at supper with his disciples, for the last time. He is addressing them: "Little children, yet a little while, and I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, *as I said unto the Jews*, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.... Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards." On this third occasion, the import of our Lord's expressions was still left in uncertainty, even with his disciples. On proceeding to John xiv. 19, we perceive the same turn of discourse: "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live ye shall live also." Here again, although the subject is considerably dwelt upon, the perplexity is not removed. What is said is rather preparatory to an explanation, than the explanation itself. In fact, the same kind of sentiment is impressed upon their minds, for the last time, in John xvi. 16. "A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father." Upon this, our Lord entered upon a discourse, which



closed with these remarkable words: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." His disciples then said unto him, "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb."...How opposed is this gradual development of divine truth, even to the disciples themselves, to an undeviating adherence to Dr Wiseman's rule—of rectifying all misapprehensions, even of the people at large, at the moment. I do not mean to assert that our Saviour did not occasionally convict gainsayers of their perverse interpretations of his words. This he did, in the two following instances, adduced by Dr Wiseman, from the eighth chapter of St John. When the Jews (John viii. 33) said, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin....If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."...When, again, (John viii. 41) the Jews, in reply to his censures, retorted that they were "not born of fornication"—our Lord "explains his meaning," as Dr Wiseman expresses it, by giving them to understand that "they were of their father, the devil," and that "the lusts of their father they would do." The difference between Dr Wiseman and myself, in this matter, consists in this—that what he conceives to be removing misappre-

hension, I believe to be the application of the severest reproof....Before I quit this part of the subject, I will point out another inaccuracy, on the part of the learned author. He adduces the case of John viii. 32 as follows: "He tells the Jews, that the truth should make them free. They take the words literally, and raise an objection accordingly." Now the Evangelist is careful to state that "Jesus said *to those Jews which believed on him*, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." It appears, indeed, as if the *unbelieving* Jews had laid hold of expressions not intended for them; and had raised the objection, that they "were never in bondage to any man:"—for our Lord (v. 37) speaks of them as "seeking to kill him, because his word had no place in them." The effect of these inaccuracies, small as well as great, of Dr Wiseman, is, an utter want of confidence in any thing that is asserted—without the most vigilant enquiry into the matter. I have, however, the satisfaction of agreeing with the learned author, in his view of John vi. 33; where, the people having understood "the bread of God" literally, our Lord explained it figuratively....After examining our Lord's different treatment of the mistakes of his hearers, whether the people at large or his own disciples—a treatment manifestly depending not upon any general rule, but upon

a perfect knowledge of the dispositions of men, and all other circumstances at the time—I deem it impossible that any one can receive what Dr Wiseman has laid down, “as a very certain corollary or canon” from the whole; namely, “that whenever our Saviour’s expressions were erroneously taken in their literal sense, and he meant them to be figurative, it was his constant practice instantly to explain himself, and let his audience understand, that his words were to be taken figuratively\*.”

I had nearly overlooked two references, given in a note (p. 100), in illustration of this part of the subject. The first is to John viii. 13; which, in Dr Wiseman’s opinion, affords “another example of our Saviour’s unwearied and meek attention to remove the misapprehension of his hearers.” We there read, that “The Pharisees said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.” To denominate this a “misapprehension,” on the part of his hearers, is a strange use of language. It was manifestly one of those malevolent objections already pointed out, as marking the character of the audience then present. Our Lord, however, condescended to reply; and showed them that, on the principles of their own law, his record was true: “I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” Now, a person anxious to have stated things fairly would not have stopped short, as Dr Wiseman has

\* Lectures, p. 99.



done. Such a person would have seen that the perverseness of the Pharisees was not abated; for, we are informed, "then said they unto him, Where is thy Father?" In this case, as before—according to Dr Wiseman's notions—we should be warranted in expecting an endeavour to remove "the misapprehension" of the Pharisees. But our Lord disregarded the question, and adverted only to their evil dispositions: "Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also." Such is Dr Wiseman's infatuation, with regard to passages intended to support his hypothesis—that there is scarcely one of them which is not sufficient to overthrow it entirely.... The other reference is to John xvi. 18—22; with respect to which the reader has already had some observations in a preceding page (145). I need only say, that the learned author, in this instance, fully maintains whatever character he may have established, with the reader, for marvellous infelicity of reference.

Our next business is to enquire into those cases in which our Lord's words "were *rightly* understood in their literal sense, and by that correct interpretation gave rise to murmurs or objections;" in which cases Dr Wiseman affirms that "it was his custom to stand to his words, and repeat again the very sentiment which had given the offence." The first instance, designed to establish this rule, is the following:



“Matt. ix. 2. Jesus ‘said to the man sick of the palsy, Son, be of good heart, thy sins are forgiven thee.’ The hearers took these words in their literal meaning, and were right in doing so; still they expressed their displeasure with them, saying, ‘this man blasphemeth.’ Our Lord does not abate the least in the expression, which, being rightly understood, had caused the objections, but in his answer repeats it again and again. ‘Which is easier to say, *thy sins are forgiven thee*, or to say, rise up and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to *forgive sins*,’ &c.” (p. 100.)

Any thing less to the purpose than this can scarcely be imagined. It tends, however, to prove, by another example, that, from some motive or other, Dr Wiseman, in drawing up his lectures, must have intended never to quote correctly. From the preceding account, the reader would naturally suppose that the 9th chapter of St Matthew presents a regular statement of objections and replies. But what is the fact? “Certain of the Scribes *said within themselves*, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus, *knowing their thoughts*, said, Wherefore think ye evil *in your hearts*?” Our Lord’s reproof, therefore, was not drawn forth by the popular statement of objections, whether on principles right or wrong—nor, to use Dr Wiseman’s turn of phrase, because the hearers “expressed their displeasure—saying, This man blasphemeth”—but by the knowledge that “certain of the Scribes” thought “evil in their hearts.”...But I have yet some remarks to offer upon the case before us—in which our Lord deigned to notice the “evil

thoughts," of certain of the bye-standers, with regard to his power to forgive sins. With his procedure in that case, let us compare his conduct in another (Luke vii. 36), in which he claimed the same power. As our Lord sat at meat, in the house of Simon the Pharisee, "a woman in the city, which was a sinner...brought an alabaster box of ointment; and stood at his feet behind him weeping; and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake *within himself* saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, for she is a sinner." Our Lord deemed this a proper opportunity "for reproof and instruction in righteousness;" and addressing his host, described the case of "a certain creditor which had two debtors;" the one of whom owed him much, the other little; The creditor, however, "frankly forgave them both." After drawing forth the Pharisee's opinion respecting the debtor who would "love the most," our Lord turned to the woman; and, making the feelings, voluntarily attributed to the debtors, the means of comparing her conduct with that of the Pharisee, said unto her, "Thy sins are forgiven." "And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" But, on this

occasion, our Lord was silent on the subject; and how impressive is his silence. He exercised the power, and left the objectors to their own evil imaginations. He merely said to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." And thus it appears, even according to Dr Wiseman's own mode of exemplification, that our Lord did *not* always "stand to his words," in the meaning intended by the learned author; nor "repeat the very sentiment which had given offence."... We may now proceed to the second voucher for the rule:

"John viii. 56. Our Redeemer said to the Jews, 'Abraham your father rejoiced that he might see my day: he saw it, and was glad.' His auditors *correctly* took his words in their literal import, as equivalent to an assertion that he was coeval with Abraham; and they murmured accordingly. 'The Jews then said to him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' Our Saviour, though he foresaw that personal violence would be the consequence of his conduct, did not seek to modify his words, but exactly repeated, with his usual intrepidity, the very sentiment which had caused so much offence. 'Jesus said to them, Amen, amen, I say unto you, before Abraham was made, I am.' Thus does the eighth chapter of St John afford us marked exemplification of our blessed Redeemer's manner of acting in both cases, when rightly and when erroneously understood to speak in the literal sense." (p. 101.)

Through the eighth chapter of St John, our Lord, as I have already remarked, is treated by the people not only with harshness but with ferocity. They had boasted, among other things, of Abraham as their father. With the view of contrasting their



own temper and disposition with those of Abraham; on their descent from whom they so greatly valued themselves, our Lord observed, "Your father Abraham REJOICED to see my day: and he saw it and WAS GLAD." Here was an opportunity for a retort: "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Then came the ever-memorable reply: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." This latter reply is by no means, as Dr Wiseman supposes, *an exact repetition of the very sentiment* conveyed by the first. It substantiates by a positive affirmation that which the other only-*implied*. The former relates primarily to *the rejoicing* of Abraham. The latter relates solely to *our Lord's pre-existence*. Blinded with rage, the Jews thought that they had caught him stating indirectly, what he would not dare distinctly to avow; and his reply, although it exasperated them to the utmost, has left an everlasting testimony to the divinity of his nature... In this instance, that, which the people had justly, although malignantly, inferred, was affirmed by our Lord as a truth, however obnoxious it might be; but we have yet to learn that such was "his invariable practice."

Dr Wiseman's third and last instance is taken from the sixth chapter of St John, and is thus explained:

"Our Saviour having said that he had come down from heaven, is correctly understood, yet murmured against. (v. 42)



‘And they said, Is not this Jesus, whose father and mother we know? How then saith he, I came down from heaven?’ He acts in his usual manner. As they had understood him rightly, he cares not for the objection; but having premised the reasons why they did not believe in him, goes on, in the second part of his discourse, to repeat again and again the very phrase which had caused complaint, by saying that he came down from heaven.” (p. 101.)

For my own part, unless this instance had been produced, as one in which our Lord acted “in his usual manner,” I should have thought it well suited to detect the fallacy of Dr Wiseman’s rule or “canon.” The professed object of the instance was to show that, when the people were right, our Lord “stood to his words, and repeated the very sentiment which had given the offence;” whereas, in the case mentioned John vi. 42, Dr Wiseman alleges that “as the people had understood him rightly, *he cares not for the objection*,” but goes on to state the reasons why they did not believe in him. If such things are to be classed under the same predicament, where shall we find those which are at variance with each other? To suppose besides, with Dr Wiseman, that, after intimating to the objectors how little their murmurs were to be attended to, our Lord repeated his assertions, with reference to their cavils, is not perhaps the strangest fancy that distinguishes the lectures under review—but certainly a more absurd notion than could easily be discovered in the writings of other men. But still farther, the people

objected, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know; how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" They understood him, therefore, to speak of a personal (corporal) descent; and this, be it observed, is the last objection raised by the hearers, before our Lord, according to Dr Wiseman's own views of the matter, proceeded to the second part of his discourse. "Our Saviour," observes the learned author, "having said that he had come down from heaven, is correctly understood." Then the people were right in understanding him *literally*:—what other meaning can be assigned to Dr Wiseman's language? Now, if the reader should have forgotten that the first part of Dr Wiseman's second lecture was occupied in showing that the people understood this part of the discourse *figuratively*, the second section of this work (from p. 64 to p. 75) will remind him of the fact; the learned author's conclusion being, "that those who heard our Lord could not possibly misunderstand this portion of his discourse, nor give any other interpretation to the figure there used, than that of being spiritually nourished by the doctrines which he brought down from heaven." Such are the inconsistencies into which a man is inevitably betrayed, when he ventures upon minute arguments in defence of an erroneous hypothesis. So long as he envelopes himself in, what some writer terms, "mean and dastardly generalities," he is tolerably secure; but

no sooner does he engage in details, than he is transfixed by a thousand shafts. After all, considering the nature of the reasonings advanced in this third lecture, there is something truly wonderful in the recapitulation, of Dr Wiseman's achievements, which is presented in the following paragraph from his own pen :

“The two rules then are sufficiently clear: when his hearers, *misunderstanding* his words, raise objections, Jesus *explains* them; when *understanding* them *right*, they find fault, he *repeats* them. In order, therefore, to discover whether the Jews understood our Saviour wrong or right in our case, we have only to look at his answer to their objection, and see whether he explains his previous words as in *the eleven instances* I first brought; or repeats the obnoxious expressions as in the three last cases which I quoted.” (p. 102.)

Of the *eleven instances* (if there are eleven), first referred to in the preceding paragraph—and discussed in this volume, from p. 133 to p. 149—there is *but one*, that of John vi. 33, which affords the slightest support to Dr Wiseman's first rule. The rest are either nothing to the purpose, or directly opposed to the rule. Of the *three cases* afterwards alluded to, *one* is but little to the purpose:—the other two are as adverse to the second rule as cases possibly can be....Such is the kind of induction of particulars, by which this learned writer seems to believe that general theorems may be established. After many years' attention to the inductive method of ascertaining principles, I honestly declare that Dr Wiseman's present attempt

in that way is, in my estimation, by far the most complete failure I have ever witnessed. But even if his instances and cases had been much more applicable to the point than they are, he knows little of the human mind, if he supposes that those who really bestow attention on the subject, can admit that the purport of our Lord's discourses may be decided by such rules. We have, it seems, "only to look" at our Lord's answer to objections, and see whether he explains, or repeats, his expressions—and all necessity for farther investigation is superseded. Reflection would then serve but to embarrass the matter. Interpretation becomes a mechanical process; and Dr Wiseman's rules will instantly give us the sense of the passage. There is indeed, throughout his lectures, too much of this *hermeneutical machinery* at work. They abound in hints which might be of great avail towards a contrivance for extracting the meaning of authors, without the trouble of thought. So that, a project, the conception of which might have pointed the wit of the satirist, has been anticipated in good earnest by Dr Wiseman. A scheme of interpretation, which, if designed for ordinary cases, would only excite derision, becomes intolerable when applied to Scripture; and without reference to particular doctrines, I would, in the most determined manner, withstand the attempt to subject any portion of the Sacred Records, to the operation of such principles as we have been con-



sidering. Those principles are essentially wrong. They rest upon this unwarranted assumption—namely, that our Lord dealt with one crowd of people as he dealt with another crowd:—if they did not understand, he regularly explained—if they understood and were perverse, he constantly re-affirmed. The assumption is unwarranted: for we have already seen cases of the first class, in which he did not explain—and of the second, in which he did not re-affirm. The assumption is unwarranted: because the Gospels every where give undeniable witness to the fact, that our Lord looked rather to the moral qualities, than to the correct or incorrect perceptions, of those with whom he had to do. The varieties of disposition, behaviour and circumstances—perfectly known to HIM who knew the most secret intentions of men, but to us entirely unknown—would naturally produce a different mode of treating persons who, as to the mere understanding of his discourses, were much upon an equality. A little reflection on the subject will suffice to show that our Lord might repeat his assertions to one set of hearers, who understood and believed him, for the purpose of strengthening their impressions; to another set, who understood and opposed him, he might do the same, for the purpose of letting them the more acutely feel that he had nevertheless told them the truth; and to a third set, who misunderstood and opposed him, he might repeat his assertions, as an indication

that the time for explanation was past—and that they were thenceforward left to the operation of their own untoward wills. Much might be added on such a topic; but what has been stated may, it is hoped, be the means of giving a useful direction to the reader's thoughts. My conclusion is, that, notwithstanding Dr Wiseman's efforts to invest his rules of interpretation with some semblance of plausibility, those rules can never be admitted, except in regions, in which the public mind is darkened, beyond all hope of recovery.

The learned author appropriates the last ten pages of his third lecture, to the consideration of "some objections which may be brought against the train of argument" he had been pursuing. "It may be said," he proceeds, "that I have laid down as a rule, that it was our Saviour's constant practice to explain himself when, his meaning being mistaken, objections were raised against his doctrines; and if this rule be erroneous, all my reasoning falls to the ground." The objections, then, are avowedly of serious consequence. Let us see how they are obviated. The first, derived from John ii. 18–22, is thus stated:

"Upon the Jews asking Jesus for a sign of his authority, in driving the tradesmen from the temple, he said to them—'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews then said, Six and forty years was this temple in building; and wilt thou raise it up again in three days? But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen again from the dead, his disciples remembered

that he had said this; and they believed the Scripture, and the word that Jesus had said.' Here the Jews understood his words literally, when he meant them to be understood figuratively; yet he gives no explanation. On the contrary, the Jews retained their erroneous interpretation to the end; for they made it a charge against him at his trial; and the Apostles themselves, as appears from the very text, did not understand it till after the resurrection." (p. 105.)

Here then, we have an indisputable fact—that our Lord did not correct the erroneously literal interpretation of his words; but left both the people and his disciples in the dark, respecting their import. And we thus learn, that it was *not* "his constant practice" to explain his meaning, when mistaken. No arguments can be of any avail, in opposition to fact; but such as the learned lecturer has thought proper to advance shall be fairly exhibited, in the order assigned to them.

Dr Wiseman first contends that "the expression"—*this temple*—"used by our Saviour, was one of such obvious occurrence," when applied to the human body, "that the Jews ought to have understood him without difficulty." Now, not to dwell at present upon the facility with which the Jews might have understood the expression—on which point I differ from Dr Wiseman very materially—I affirm that this is an argument, from the use of which he is completely debarred by his own proceedings. When discussing the first part of the discourse in John vi, he takes some pains—as we have already seen, p. 65—to show, by reference



to learned authorities, that, when our Lord spoke of himself as “the *bread* from heaven” and “the *bread* of life,” he adopted phrases in their “customary meaning”—“in use among the Jews of our Saviour’s time”—phrases “calculated to convey to the minds of those who heard him the idea of listening to his doctrines and believing in him:”—and yet Dr Wiseman asserts—what indeed is obvious to any one—that our Lord gave a “clear and decisive explanation” of those phrases\*. Now, Dr Wiseman’s language does not go so far as to insinuate, that the allusion to *the temple* in John ii. leads us as directly, as that to *the bread of life* in John vi, to the signification intended. With what propriety, then, can he urge *the ease with which the Jews might have understood the expression in question* as a reply to the objection under review? Again, when treating of our Lord’s conference with Nicodemus (John iii. 3—5) the learned author describes the expression, *born again*, as “one in ordinary use among the Jewish doctors,” in its figurative sense; and yet, when it was misunderstood, even by a Jewish doctor, “our Saviour instantly explained the words in their figurative meaning to him.” Such, as we have before seen (p. 133), is Dr Wiseman’s account of this matter. In short, Nicodemus (John iii.) might have understood an expression, but did not understand it—and so it was explained to him:—the Jews (John ii.)

\* Lectures, pp. 49, 50, 55.



might have understood an expression, but did not understand it—and that is given as a reason why it was *not* explained to them. There is something about this kind of logic which, I suspect, is rather calculated for the climate of Italy than that of England.

On the occasion of our Lord's appearance in the temple, as mentioned in John ii, there are no marks of the leading men among the Jews having been present; and notwithstanding Dr Wiseman's notion of the clearness of our Lord's expression, people will doubt whether he deemed the question to have been proposed in a temper, which might warrant a definite reply. To illustrate these observations, let me remind the reader that, on another occasion mentioned by the three other Evangelists (Matt. xxi. 23; Mark xi. 27; Luke xx. 1), when our Saviour was in the temple, "the chief priests and the scribes came upon him, with the elders," and said unto him "Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?" In return, our Lord asked them whether John's baptism was from heaven, or of men; and when "they answered that they could not tell whence it was"—he "said unto them, Neither tell I you, by what authority I do these things." The language and disposition of the objectors, in this instance, appear to have been very similar to those of the people, in the case already discussed; and on neither occasion,

probably, did our Lord intend to give an explicit answer. Yet we see how differently he proceeded; and we ought, in consequence, to feel how incompetent we are to lay down rules by which we can suppose him to have been guided in his intercourse with men. Dr Wiseman may be a very learned person; but he intruded into a province, from which he will do well to retire, when he ventured to estimate, by his own imperfect notions, the conduct of HIM, to whom were manifest the inmost thoughts of those, who, for whatever purpose, sought his presence. There is, in an attempt of this kind, a degree of rashness, from the effects of which no subtilty can be a protection. With all his acuteness, Dr Wiseman has thus added to the long catalogue of his inconsistencies and contradictions; and I would hope that the publicity now given to his misrepresentations may operate as a warning to those who might otherwise be tempted to follow his example.

But to return: The learned author seems to find the expression, "destroy this temple," too easy, as it were, to require explication. Now, whoever is acquainted with the many indecisive comments, which exist on the subject, will be tempted to congratulate Dr Wiseman on his perspicacity, with regard to it. His practice indeed does not tend to corroborate his theory; for after he has done his best to elucidate the matter, he is as much involved, in the maze, as his predecessors. Let

us, however, take what is presented, be it great or small, with the view of solving the difficulty. According to the learned lecturer, the human body is called *a vessel* by St Paul, Plato and Lucretius; *a house*, by Job and Isaiah; *a tabernacle*, by St Paul, Nicander, Hippocrates and certain physiological writers; and, still more, *a temple* by St Paul and Philo Judæus. Admitting all this, can any reasonable person infer that “the expression was one, of such obvious occurrence, that the Jews ought to have understood him without difficulty?” If the turn of thought was derived, as Dr Wiseman and other learned men represent, *from the eastern philosophers*, the expression could scarcely have been familiar to the people at large; and, as I have already stated, there is not the least hint that the Scribes and Pharisees and men of information were present. Kuinoel—from whose note on John ii. 19, Dr Wiseman has derived information, respecting the application of the words *vessel*, *house*, *tabernacle*, &c. to the human body, which demanded a much more distinct acknowledgment than we find—Kuinoel, I say, employs language far better suited to the occasion, than that presented by the learned lecturer. Instead of maintaining that “the expression, used by our Saviour, was one, of such obvious occurrence, that the Jews ought to have understood him without difficulty”—he merely infers that the metaphor was “neither so harsh, nor so remote from the apprehension of



the Jews, as to render it quite unfit to be employed by our Lord\*.”... This, then, is the present state of the case: The authorities adduced do not prove that the phrase, used by our Lord, was such as the people could easily understand; nor, if that were proved, would it, even according to Dr Wiseman’s own principles, set aside the objection under consideration.

And here, a few observations—on two or three of the passages, designed to show that the Jews ought to have understood the metaphorical signification of the expression, *destroy this temple*—will not, I trust, displease the reader; who may, indeed, thus derive some relief from the uniformity of the main subject. “The body,” Dr Wiseman writes, “is styled *a tabernacle* by St Paul (2 Cor. v. 1, 2, 4); and his words, as Dr Lardner has observed, are strikingly illustrated by a passage in Josephus, who, as a Pharisee, was necessarily versed in the mystic language of eastern philosophy.” There would assuredly be some difficulty in pointing out any age or region of the world, in which “the mystic language of eastern philosophy” was generally familiar to the minds of men; but not having, at present, any intention to dwell upon topics at all

\* “Qui quidem loci luculenter ostendunt hunc metaphoricum vocis *vad's* usum neque tam durum, neque tam peregrinum atque ignotum fuisse Judæis, ut a Jesu nullo modo adhiberi potuerit.” I may take this opportunity to state that Rosenmüller ends his note on John ii. 21. *He spake of the temple of his body*—thus: “Cæterum in re tam impeditâ ultra probabilitatem procedere non licet”—indicating that *he* did not think the case free from perplexity.



disagreeable to Dr Wiseman, I proceed to extract, from Lardner, what relates to St Paul and Josephus. It is really interesting :

“The city of Jotapata, where Josephus commanded, was now taken ; and he and some others had hid themselves in a cave. He was for surrendering to Vespasian ; the rest of the company were rather for killing themselves, and threatened to kill him if he did not come into the same sentiment. In order to dissuade them from this design, among other things, he says, ‘All have mortal bodies, formed of corruptible matter. But the soul is immortal, and being a portion of God, is housed in bodies.—What! know you not, that they who depart out of life according to the law of nature, and return to God the debt they have received from him, when it is the will of him that gave it, have eternal praise, and durable houses and generations ; and that pure and obedient souls remain, having received an holy place in heaven ; from whence, after the revolution of ages, they shall be again housed in pure bodies.’\* If I mistake not, St Paul’s figures in 2 Cor. v. 1, 2, have a resemblance with these of Josephus. ‘For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.’”

In addition to the similarity between St Paul and Josephus, as suggested in the preceding paragraph, the reader will not fail to observe the change

\* “Τὰ μὲν γε σώματα θνητὰ πᾶσι, καὶ ἐκ φθαρτῆς ὕλης δημιουργεῖται· ψυχὴ δὲ ἀθάνατος αἰεὶ, καὶ Θεοῦ μοῖρα τοῖς σώμασιν ἐνοικίζεται.... ἄρα οὐκ ἴστε, ὅτι τῶν μὲν ἐξιόντων τοῦ βίον κατὰ τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον, καὶ τὸ ληφθὲν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ χρέος ἐκτινόντων, ὅταν ὁ δοὺς κομίσασθαι θέλῃ, κλέος μὲν αἰώνιον, οἴκοι δὲ καὶ γενεαὶ βέβαιοι, καθαρὰ δὲ καὶ ἐπήκοοι μένουσιν αἱ ψυχαί, χωρὸν οὐρανοῦ λαχοῦσαι τὸν ἀγιώτατον, ἔνθεν ἐκ περιτροπῆς αἰώνων ἀγνοῖς πάλιν ἀντενοικίζονται σώμασιν.” Jos. de Bello Jud. iii. 5. Also, Lardner’s Works, Vol. i. p. 68. ed. 1815, or Vol. i. p. 127. ed. 1827.

produced, in Dr Lardner's quiet and cautious hint —“If I mistake not, St Paul's figures have a resemblance with these of Josephus”—when viewed through the medium of Dr Wiseman's imagination: —“his [St Paul's] words, as Dr Lardner has observed, are strikingly illustrated by a passage in Josephus.” To a critic, the magnifying faculty is a dangerous possession.

St Paul (1 Cor. iii. 16) terms the Christian “the temple of God (ναὸς Θεοῦ)” —likewise (1 Cor. vi. 19) “his body the temple of the Holy Ghost (τὸ σῶμα—ναὸς τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος).” Philo Judæus is referred to, by Dr Wiseman, as “using the same image—styling the body *ναὸν* and *ἱερόν*.” This account of Philo seems to have been imperfectly taken from Kuinoel—whose representation also admits of correction. The words of the Jewish philosopher are worthy of observation. When writing of the formation of the first man, he thus describes his body: οἶκος γάρ τις ἢ νεὸς ἱερὸς ἐτεκταίνετο ψυχῆς λογικῆς *for it was built as a house, or sacred temple, of the rational soul.*

The learned author likewise mentions Lucretius, as denominating the body *a temple*; in proof of which he cites the following lines:

—— Via quâ munita fidei

Proxuma fert humanum in pectus, templaque mentis.

Whoever induced Dr Wiseman to suppose that, in these lines, Lucretius stated the body to be *the temple of the mind*, was the occasion of a

considerable mistake. To perceive the truth of the matter, the entire passage must be transcribed:

Nec me animi fallit, quam res nova, miraque menti,  
 Accidat, exitium cœli terræque futurum:  
 Et quam difficile id mihi sit pervincere dictis:  
 Ut fit, ubi insolitam rem adportes auribus ante,  
 Nec tamen hanc possis oculorum subdere visu,  
 Nec jacere indu manus, via quâ munita fidei  
 Proxima fert humanum in pectus, templaque mentis.

LUCR. v. 98—104.

The poet is describing the difficulty of giving credibility to things previously unknown, and at the same time not objects of the senses; inasmuch as it is by the senses that the certain intelligence of things is conveyed “to the breast—the temple of the mind.” As one of the followers of Epicurus, he held that the intellectual faculty—called by the Greeks *νοῦς*, by the Latins *mens*, *animus*—had its seat within the breast. In another place, Lucretius has distinctly described the tenet of his sect, on the subject:

Sed caput esse quasi, et dominari in corpore toto  
 Consilium, quod nos *animum*, *mentemque* vocamus:  
 Idque situm mediâ regione in pectoris hæret.

III. 139—141.

The learned reader will recollect many allusions to this opinion, in the writings of ancient poets. But on such subjects my limits do not allow me to dwell. Enough indeed has been produced, to show that Lucretius has not spoken of the body, in the sense intended by Dr Wiseman, as the temple of the mind.



To confirm the notion, that the words, “destroy this temple,” were quite intelligible in the sense in which they were uttered, Dr Wiseman appeals to “the commentators who adopt the ordinary interpretation, of referring the text wholly to the resurrection.” Those commentators, he says, suppose two things. “1. That our Saviour decided the meaning of τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον, by pointing with his finger towards himself. 2. That the Jews did really understand Christ correctly, and that it was only malignity which made them raise an objection to his words.” Now, with regard to the first supposition, there appear to me to be commentators who “refer the text wholly to the resurrection,” because they are instructed to do so by the Evangelist St John;—and not from any particular hypothesis as to our Lord’s manner at the instant. With regard to the second supposition, it is mentioned by Kuinoel, and there are some traces of it in Rosenmüller; commentators, to whose pages opinions, presenting a sufficient portion of absurdity and disrespect for the sacred writers, seem to have had an undeniable passport. The latter, for instance, records the suspicion of his Teutonic brother, D. HENR. PHIL. CONR. HENKE, *that John himself did not very well understand the true force of the expression, or the intention of his master\**, in this

\* “Suspiciatur [D. H. P. C. H.] Joannem ipsum veram sententiæ illius vim, destinatumque magistri sui consilium non benè assecutum esse.” Schol. in Joan. ii. 21.



case. But in commentators of a different order, after consulting a considerable number of them, I am persuaded that such a sentiment cannot easily be discovered; and to this persuasion I adhere the more strongly, in consequence of the learned author's own reference in proof of his position. The note, which I am about to transcribe from pp. 107, 108, I deem one of the most curious specimens of exemplification to be found, even in the lectures on the Eucharist:

"The explanation given by John (v. 21) has in its favour, not merely the phraseology of the Bible, but also the circumstance which so observant an auditor as John, may have noticed, that Jesus, at the *τοῦτον*, (p. 19) *pointed to his own body*, which may have been overlooked by such stupid people as the adversaries of Jesus were." Gottlob. Christ. Storr, in his dissertation entitled, 'Did Jesus appeal to his miracles as a proof of his divine mission?' in Flatt's 'Magazin für christliche Dogmatik und Moral.' Viertes Stück. *Tübing.* 1793, p. 19. See also Kuinoel, p. 205.

There is something, in the idea of the Jews having correctly understood our Lord's expression, in consequence of a sign—which sign they were at the same time "such stupid people" as to overlook—there is, I say, something, in this idea, which affects the mind in so singular a manner, that I dare not trust myself to expatiate upon its merits. Satisfied with having pointed out to the reader so striking an elucidation of a dark subject, I leave his own imagination to do justice to the contrivance.

Dr Wiseman goes on to inform us that the commentators already alluded to likewise "suppose

that the Apostles fully *understood* our Lord's words, as St John only tells us that they did not *believe* them, till after the resurrection; that is to say, they did not comprehend how they were to be verified." In evidence of this, the learned lecturer refers to Süskind's Observations on Henke's explanation of this passage—in 'Flatt's Magazin'—as before; yet clearly intending that the reader should fancy that the commentators in general, "who adopt the ordinary interpretation" of our Lord's words, make the same supposition. On referring to several of those commentators—Kuinoel and Rosenmüller are, of course, out of the question—I found, as I expected, not one of them in the least liable to the charge of maintaining that the disciples *understood* our Lord's expression at the time, but *believed* it not till after his resurrection; nor do I, at present, conceive that the sentiment is to be found in any such commentator, of established reputation. Lampe's account of the matter is well worth attention. In the first place, he is one of those commentators "who adopt the ordinary interpretation;" in the second, he thinks that Jesus pointed to himself; and in the third, he observes upon the 22d verse—"When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said"—"It is here supposed that, when Jesus spoke these things, the disciples were quite ignorant

of the mystery. They often betrayed their ignorance concerning other truths; but on no subject were they so much in the dark, as on the prediction of the death and resurrection of Jesus\*.” Lampe afterwards well illustrates the subject by referring to another passage of St John (xii. 16)—in which things at one time *not understood* are said to be remembered: “These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.” The distinction, indeed, attempted to be drawn in this case—with Dr Wiseman’s approbation, I presume—between *understanding* and *believing*, cannot be defended, without utterly disregarding the import of Scriptural language—especially that of St John. Grotius, on John ii. 22, speaks of the disciples, as beginning to understand the Scriptures, not only by the event of the resurrection, but by divine illumination; and of their belief, as then conjoined with intelligence. He refers also to Luke xxiv. 45, where we read that, after the resurrection, “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures†.” This is, to write like a man who is

\* “Supponitur hic, quod discipuli, cum Jesus hæc loqueretur, mysterii hujus ignari planè fuerint. Inscitiam suam circa alias veritates sæpe indicarunt, sed circa nullam aliam rem magis obtenebrati erant, quam circa prædictionem mortis et resurrectionis Jesu.” Vol. i. p. 544.

† The sentiments of Grotius, on the whole matter, are here given, as entitled to attention. On the words, v. 19. *Destroy this temple*,  
he



master of his subject....What, moreover, can be said in behalf of those who maintain that the disciples understood so figurative an expression, at the outset of our Lord's ministry—when it appears (Luke xviii. 33, 34) that, on being informed long afterwards, in plain words, that he was to be put to death, and on the third day to rise again, "they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." Dr Wiseman's argument has long since been disposed of; and so far as that is concerned, it is of no consequence in what sense this passage of Scripture is understood. My object, in pointing out such misrepresentations as we are now considering, is to vindicate the character of the sacred volume.

So far, the object of Dr Wiseman's labours, on John ii. 18—20, has been to show that, taking all the circumstances of the case, the expression, "destroy this temple" was so clear, that explanation was altogether superfluous. The learned lecturer has avowed a similar opinion, respecting expressions which *were* explained; but I will not he writes, "Malignos obscure alloquitur. Nam si probo fuissent animo, in hoc ipso facto miraculum agnovissent, quòd homo unus nullis instructus humanis viribus tantam turbam imperio suo cedere coegisset, solà turpis facti conscientia et Divinæ iræ sensu permotos. Stultos homines solemus ad operis finem rejicere: sic Christus, quamquam liberalis miraculorum, ad maximum miraculum et complementum, resurrectionem scilicet suam, frequenter responsatores rejicit." Also, on the words, v. 22. *When he was risen from the dead*, "Cum non eventu tantum sed et Divinâ illustratione cœperunt Scripturas intelligere:"—and on the words, *They believed*, "Cum intellectu scilicet."



again urge this topic. His next step is to maintain that the expression, which he has so learnedly proved to be free from ambiguity, was made obscure by our Lord from design—that it was a dark intimation—“a mysterious emblem”—of the resurrection; and therefore not to be understood till the event to which it related had come to pass. Nothing less than some extraordinary dispensation, some peculiar privilege—the nature of which we should have been glad to learn—can entitle the learned author to hold these contradictory opinions; but even this topic I will not dwell upon. Let the expression be involved, as deeply as he pleases, in prophetic difficulty. We know, however, that it is prophetic of our Lord’s death and resurrection. But the eating and drinking of his flesh and blood, if understood of the Eucharist, must also have been prophetic of that institution. How then does Dr Wiseman know that the language, in the sixth chapter of John, may not be as mysterious—as figurative—as remote from the literal interpretation of the Jews—in the one instance, as on the authority of the Apostle himself, we know the language, in the second chapter, to have been, on the other occasion? My conclusion is, that, whether the learned author holds the expression to have been perfectly easy, or extremely hard, to be understood—to say nothing of his scheme of maintaining both opinions at once—the resulting argument is equally adverse to his own hypothesis.

Dr Wiseman's next mode of reasoning, on the case of John ii, must by all means be given without mutilation. It is to the full as remarkable as any that has yet been produced :

“A third and principal difference, between the two passages under investigation, is this. I have never said that our Saviour was bound to answer the objections of the Jews ; but I have examined only his practice, when he did answer or explain : and have found that his conduct was precisely that of an honest and upright teacher, who corrected mistakes, and enforced his doctrines. But in the case of John ii, he deems it right to give no answer at all. The passage, therefore, does not belong to either of the classes above mentioned, and cannot form a term of comparison for explaining John vi. 53. It only proves that our Saviour sometimes declined answering an objection at all—and the prophetic nature of his declaration is a sufficient reason for acting so in this case:—it cannot prove that he ever answered so as to mislead his hearers.” (pp. 109, 110.)

What does the learned author mean, by the last words of this extract—“it cannot prove that he ever answered so as to mislead his hearers?” Who ever thought that our Lord did answer “so as to mislead his hearers,” on that, or on any other, occasion? If they were left in a state of wilful misapprehension, can it in the least signify whether they were so left without a reply at all, or with a repetition of the declaration which they had perverted?....But to the main object of the extract : Dr Wiseman writes, “I have never said that our Saviour was bound to answer the objection of the Jews.” Most undoubtedly, the learned writer “has never said that our Saviour was *bound* to answer ;”

but what he did say was this—namely, that “*when-ever* our Saviour’s expressions were erroneously taken in their literal sense, and he meant them to be figurative, *it was his constant practice* instantly to explain himself, and let his audience understand that his words were to be taken figuratively\*.” The reader of the preceding pages (133—149) will bear in mind the conspicuous zeal—and the no less conspicuous want of success—with which Dr Wiseman endeavoured to establish our Lord’s “constant practice”—his “invariable practice”—his “undeviating adherence to the rule”—of explaining figuratively what was literally misunderstood. The force, indeed, of the argument employed entirely depended upon the uniformity of our Lord’s proceeding in such cases. But, contends the learned author, “I have never said that our Saviour was bound to answer.” Where then, so far as the argument is concerned, is the difference between affirming that our Lord “was bound” to answer—and that “it was his constant practice” to answer? Is there, in short, to be found a single member of the Roman Catholic Church who would, for a moment, hesitate to denominate such a distinction as this—a miserable subterfuge? Moreover, Dr Wiseman in the outset engaged to “collect and examine *all* passages, where the hearers of our Saviour *erroneously* take his figurative expressions in their literal sense, and raise objections in consequence of it, and see what

\* Lectures, p. 99.



is his conduct upon such occasions\*;" and in stating the passages themselves he again and again declared that he was showing that our Lord's "constant practice" was, to answer objections alleged under those circumstances. He now says—"I have examined only his practice, when he did answer or explain." In other words, his avowed design was *to prove* that our Lord "constantly answered;" and he subsequently ventures to inform us that he "examined only" the cases in which our Lord *did* answer. Is there, I once more ask, a single member of the Roman Catholic Church, who would, for a moment, hesitate to denominate this reply—a miserable subterfuge? Finally, the sentence—"I have examined only his practice, when he did answer or explain"—involves an admission that there are instances of erroneous literal interpretation, in which our Lord did *not* "answer or explain;" an admission which shakes Dr Wiseman's system, even according to his own view of it, to the very foundation. That the Jews did in numerous instances, grossly misconceive our Lord's meaning, is beyond all doubt; and that he frequently left them to their misconceptions, is equally certain. Whether he did so, by an indignant silence—or by an indignant re-assertion of his statements—may have depended upon circumstances, connected with the temper and moral condition of the people at the time, which we

\* Lectures, p. 94.



have not the means of taking into account. With regard to the discourse in John vi.—how very far the people of Capernaum were, in our Lord's estimation, from being in the slightest degree entitled to any explanation of his doctrines, has already been shown in these pages.

The fourth and last reply, to the objection arising from John ii. 18—22, now requires a moment's attention. St John informs us that, when our Lord said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"—"he spake of the temple of his body." Dr Wiseman takes a more enlarged view of the matter. "In spite of the reasoning of Storr, Süskind, Schott and others"—he seems to care but little for St John—he "cannot read the passage, without being convinced" that our Lord alluded also to rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem, which stood before him. After remarking that an allusion like this, to the temple, would be extremely appropriate to the occasion, he goes on to observe that "the pronoun *τοῦτου*—THIS (temple)—would naturally denote the building in which he spoke." When the learned author was previously engaged in proving, not only that the expression was to be understood figuratively, but was so common, in that point of view, that it could scarcely be taken in any other—he made much of the argument—that, when our Lord mentioned "this temple," he pointed to himself. We are now taught that the same phrase "would naturally

denote the building in which he spoke." As Dr Wiseman has not produced his authority for holding opinions thus opposed to each other, I can only question, as I have before done, his exemption from the laws which are usually deemed binding upon human intelligence. In support of his present notions, the learned author—who is not very particular with regard to the character of his evidence—next produces the false witnesses who appeared against our Saviour, when on his trial. "If," says the author with commendable caution, "he used the epithet attributed to him by the false witnesses in Mark xiv. 58, τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον τὸν χειροποίητον, 'this temple built with hands,' he can hardly be supposed to have alluded primarily to any thing but the real temple." Although the Evangelist expressly states that these men "bare false witness," and that "neither did their witness agree together"—yet Dr Wiseman places great reliance upon their testimony. He sees "no reason why the witnesses *added* the epithet" *built with hands*; and if they did not add it, our Lord, he thinks, could not have applied the expression to his own body. In this manner Dr Wiseman demonstrates that the expression was to be taken in its literal sense, and applied to the real temple;—thus professing to have made the import of the passage altogether as plain in its literal, as he had before shown it to be in its figurative, signification. A strange fatality appears to attend the learned author

in his exertions. Having availed himself of the false witnesses, quite as far as was seemly in a modern divine; having supported the literal meaning of our Lord's phrase, in opposition to St John; having pointed out the effect of the epithet *χειροποίητον*, *built with hands*, in deciding the literal sense—he assigns this reason for thinking that the witnesses did not add the epithet—namely, that “it tended to weaken their own testimony, by rendering our Saviour's words *more enigmatical and obscure!*”... We find still more discussions on this passage—which has given the author no small trouble; but I cannot induce myself to extend my observations on the subject. I shall therefore conclude it, by suggesting, for the consideration of those whom it may concern, the following case—Suppose that, in interpreting the sixth chapter of St John, or any other portion of Scripture cited in elucidation, a Protestant had set aside the clear explanation of an Evangelist, and substituted his own reasonings in its stead—what would a Roman Catholic divine have thought, or said, or preached, or written, on such a proceeding?

The second objection alleged against Dr Wiseman's rule is derived from John iv. 10–15; where “our Saviour speaks of giving living waters, in a figurative sense, and the Samaritan woman manifestly understands him literally; yet he gives no explanation.” To the objection, thus stated, Dr Wiseman responds as follows:

"1. That, as in the last, our Saviour declines answering her difficulty at all; and therefore, the passage belongs to neither of the cases for which I have laid down a rule. 2. That, according to the opinion of the best commentators, the woman in v. 15, received our Saviour's words with irony and levity, and did not so much solicit an explanation, as ridicule his words." (p. 112.)

The first of these replies has already been sufficiently noticed; and the second can scarcely detain us long. That the woman understood our Lord to have been speaking literally of water, when she said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw"—must be manifest to every one; but how it is possible for any one to attribute to her the least tendency to irony or levity, in making such a request, is to me inexplicable. Yet, according to Dr Wiseman, this is done by "the best commentators." Lampe, indeed, mentions the doubts of interpreters on the subject; and hints that there may have been something slightly sarcastic in her manner: but he mentions no names\*. Kuinoel also informs us that "there have been those who thought so" (*fuerunt qui putarent*);—this however is not language usually applied to "the best commentators." That the commentators, who take this view of the matter, are "the best," I should be sorry to believe; as I am but little acquainted with their labours....The Sa-

\* "Interpres dubitant, an responsum hoc ex merâ simplicitate et ignorantia, an verò ex malitia profluxerit. Sarcasticum quid subesse videtur." Vol. i. p. 729.



maritan woman appears to me to have merely done that, in perfect simplicity—which others, with far better opportunities of knowing our Lord's method of discourse, generally did—to have mistaken the literal for the spiritual meaning. Should, however, so strange a construction be put upon the woman's conduct, compare it with the scornful and violent proceedings of the Jews of Jerusalem, as recorded in John viii.—or with the sullen discontent of the Jews of Capernaum, as described in John vi.—and then determine what weight can be allowed to such a reason for our Lord's silence, at the well of Sychar. These are all the remarks, that I think worth making, upon the learned author's second reply. At least, I will only, in addition, avail myself of his own assistance, in refuting what he has already advanced. Having urged, as we have seen, “the opinion of the best commentators,” he—very naturally, as it appears to me—next takes the opposite side of the question, in the following manner:

“A female comes, and he uses his right, by asking her for water. Nothing can be more beautifully natural than the dialogue which follows this request; every reply of our Saviour, in particular, is most aptly directed to his great object, *which was not to instruct*, but to excite the woman's interest in his regard; to stimulate her curiosity concerning him (and her language at v. 11 showed that he had inspired her with respect); and to make her his instrument for the consequences which followed. When he had wrought up these feelings to the highest point, till she asked (v. 15) at length, that he would give her the water whereof he spoke,

he most ingeniously leads her to a still more interesting, and to her, intensely trying topic, by the natural suggestion that her husband ought to be present." (p. 113.)

Here, as the reader will have observed, the scene is changed. We no longer behold the Samaritan woman treating our Lord "with irony and levity." All on her part, according to the new representation, is "curiosity" and "respect"—"wrought up to the highest pitch;" and every thing is now made exactly to correspond to this more interesting state of things....I have so often had occasion to animadvert upon the strange inconsistencies of this learned author, that my stock of phrases applicable to the subject is fairly exhausted. My opinion is, that, in the dexterity with which he maintains an opinion on one page, and the direct contrary on the next, he exists in the world—without a rival....But the Samaritan woman being, according to the present scheme, full of curiosity and respect—the question recurs, why did not our Lord correct her misapprehension of his meaning? Dr Wiseman, who is seldom at a loss, tells us that *his object was not to instruct*. Now if there should be any reader, of this volume, so unfortunate as not to recollect our Lord's most striking discourse, on this occasion—respecting the true worshipper, worshipping God, in spirit and in truth—I entreat him to peruse the fourth chapter of St John. In short, let any one meditate for a space on the solemn import of that discourse,

and he will at once be enabled to decide upon the consideration due to Dr Wiseman's assertion—that our Lord's object, at the time, was not to instruct.... My limits will not allow me to discuss the consequences ingeniously drawn by the learned author from these premises. This section, indeed, must have put the reader's patience to the test; but the important bearings, of the topics successively brought under review, will, I trust, be admitted as a good reason for having discussed those topics with some minuteness. After the sentiments I have expressed, respecting the various parts of this third lecture, my judgment of the whole can be no secret.

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## PART I. SECTION IV.

### OUR LORD'S ANSWER TO THE JEWS, AND HIS CONDUCT TO HIS DISCIPLES.

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A LARGE mass of well-consolidated error is not easily rent to pieces; while a congeries of errors, gliding away from each other by their mutual action, only requires the removal of external compression, to be reduced to a state in which it can no longer impose upon the world. Had Dr Wiseman's hypothesis, respecting the sixth chapter of St John, rested on one substantial principle—or a number of principles well adjusted, and firmly bound together—there might have been some difficulty in effecting its destruction; but consisting as it does—if, in reality, it may be said to *consist*—of many unconnected mistakes, counteracting each other—a very small effort seems enough to ruin its pretensions to public confidence. The reader, when proceeding to consider what remains on the present subject, will bear in mind the flagrant misstatements and fallacious reasonings which have been pointed out:—will reflect that, whatever may seem plausible in the subsequent opinions of Dr Wiseman can be of no avail, in rectifying what has been shown to be wrong; and that whatever



inaccuracies may yet appear will add to a number which needs no augmentation.

To take a sentence apart from its context, and then compare it with another sentence, bearing some distant resemblance in construction, but quite different in subject—does not promise any great success, as a method of ascertaining its precise meaning. This, however, appears to be a favourite expedient with Dr Wiseman; who thus commences his discussion on “our Saviour’s answer to the Jews,” (John vi. 53—58) when they asked, ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’

“The words of Jesus Christ are these: ‘Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye shall not have life in you; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life.’ (vv. 53, 54.) Now compare the words of St Mark (xvi. 16) ‘He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not, shall be condemned;’ and we cannot but be struck by two reflections. 1. The beautiful similarity of form with which we find the two principal sacraments of the Christian Religion inculcated, if with the Catholic Church we suppose the words of St John to refer to the Eucharist. 2. The clearness of the expression in St Mark, and the absolute incomprehensibility in that of St John, the moment we take it in the Protestant sense; since our Lord would be giving a precept, with a promise of eternal life to its observers, or a threat of eternal death to its violators, which would be totally unintelligible to his hearers. For I have proved already, and have adduced the authority of the learned Tittman, that our Saviour, if not speaking of the real presence, spoke not according to the received usages of language among his hearers. And, in fact, such is the variety of interpretations among Protestant writers upon this discourse, that it is manifestly obscure and unintelligible, if we seek for figurative explana-

tions. Now it is evidently the nature of a law or precept, with a threat of punishment annexed, that it should be clear, distinct, and well defined. Such is the one for Baptisms, and such is this, if we understand it of the real presence." (p. 118.)

With regard to the first of the two reflections contained in the foregoing paragraph, I would observe, that the very language in which it is conveyed evinces the difficulty in which the writer was placed by his own hypothesis. The passage in St Mark presents our Lord's formal institution of Baptism for the Gentiles—his final command and commission to the Apostles—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature:" with the assurance—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Thus then, in Dr Wiseman's phrase, was one of "the two principal sacraments of the Christian religion *inculcated*." A strange term truly, to be applied to the last solemn appointment of the disciples to the Apostolic office—to our Lord's parting injunction to them, before his ascension; and applied too, for the purpose of assimilating that command with our Lord's reply to the murmurs of a Galilean multitude, whose expectations he had not deigned to fulfil. Dr Wiseman could not use the word *instituted*, with reference to the passage in John vi; because no reader could possibly forget that the sacrament of the Eucharist was instituted on a subsequent occasion. Does not the simple state-

ment of these circumstances proclaim the fallacy of his notions on the subject? In fact, notwithstanding that “beautiful similarity” which the learned author is so anxious to point out, there is one great *difference*, between the two passages when thus brought together, which is of itself sufficient to convince me, that the literal interpretation of the passage in St John is wrong. We see, in the baptismal commission, what great stress is laid upon the internal principle of the recipient—upon faith—“he that believeth and is baptized”—“he that believeth not”—in accordance with the tenor of the New Testament; whereas, the words in St John, taken in their literal sense, convey no intimation of any internal principle whatever—everlasting life being made to depend upon the gross and material eating and drinking—which may be performed by those who have not faith. This essential discrepancy in sentiment is assuredly of greater consequence than any fancied similarity of form; and the discrepancy is entirely removed by assigning, to the passage in St John, a spiritual signification. The intimation, that the literal meaning is that adopted by the Church of Rome—being, as Dr Wiseman well knows, not founded in fact—was thrown in merely to round the sentence and produce an impression.—With regard to the learned author’s second reflection—in which he perseveres in considering the two passages, as equally applicable to the two sacraments—



I would observe that the obscurity, amounting "to the absolute absence of comprehensibility," with which he charges the Protestant sense, may be attributed, with much greater truth, to the sense of which Dr Wiseman is the advocate. If a spiritual sense be given to the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ—it is that for which the spiritual import of the preceding part of the discourse naturally *prepares* the mind:—whereas, if a literal sense be given to the same expression, with reference to the Eucharist, it is a sense introduced without notice—a sense of which not a single individual present could have the slightest conception. I have so much opinion of the common sense actually existing in the world, that I will not suppose the possibility of any person's asserting his belief, that even one of our Lord's hearers at the time—whether his disciples, or the people at large—either had, or could have, the most distant idea of the sacrament of the Eucharist—which was, in fact, not instituted till a considerable time afterwards. Since, then, the multitude must have been totally in the dark, respecting this Eucharistical signification, what becomes of Dr Wiseman's dictum—"it is evidently of the nature of a law or precept, with a threat of punishment annexed, that it should be clear, distinct, and well-defined"—as an argument, drawn from this passage, in favour of the Real Presence? The spiritual interpretation is free from all dif-



difficulty of the kind; and indeed from another difficulty, which, although not noticed by Dr Wiseman, is well entitled to attention. "A law or precept" should not only "be clear, distinct, and well-defined"—to use the learned author's expression—but, in the nature of things, possible to be kept by those to whom it is promulgated. Now apply this to our Lord's words, in Dr Wiseman's sense, and "the law or precept" is made impossible to be complied with, by those who heard him:—the Eucharist was not instituted—and so, could not be observed by the people then present. But apply the same to the words, in a spiritual sense, and they are binding as well upon the people then present, as upon believers in all succeeding ages. The mind is directed to those internal principles, which are the great requisites in every act of Christian duty; and a special reference may, at the same time, have been made to that solemn commemoration of our Saviour's passion, which it was his intention to institute. Let the reader now decide which view of the subject is the more scriptural—the more luminous—and the more satisfactory to a plain understanding....As for "the authority of the learned Tittman"—adduced in proof that "our Saviour, if not speaking of the real presence, spoke not according to the received usages of language among his hearers"—I really think that Dr Wiseman would have acted more prudently, if he had kept that authority for his own private edification,

instead of divulging it for the public advantage. In the first place, I wonder there was no reflection of this kind—namely, that our Saviour, even if speaking of the real presence in the Eucharist, could not possibly have spoken “according to the received usages of language among his hearers.” How could there have been “received usages of language” on a subject which had never been heard of or imagined? The learned author might have been content with delivering so absurd a sentiment in his Lecture room: he ought not to have suffered it to appear in print. In the second place, on examining Tittman’s real authority—that is to say, his words, as quoted by Dr Wiseman—I can discover no hypothetical clause, like that assigned to him—“if not speaking of the real presence.” My wish being to confirm every thing alleged, as far as may be, by evidence, I here give Dr Wiseman’s translation of Tittman’s sentiments on the subject:

“They [commentators] appeal to the *usus loquendi* of profane authors, who use the words *to eat* and *drink*, speaking of a person who is imbued with the doctrines of any one, so as to receive and approve of them. It is, indeed, true, that Greek and Latin writers use the words *to eat* and *drink* in this sense; but that they so used the phrases *to eat the flesh* and *drink the blood* of any one, cannot be proved by a single example. These forms of expression were clearly unheard of, by any authors, and are peculiar to our Lord alone; therefore can we nowise appeal to their custom of speech.” (p. 78.)

The learned Tittman we see, according to Dr Wiseman’s own version, writes absolutely—I mean,

without the condition, “if not speaking of the real presence”—that our Lord’s forms of expression were “unheard of.” Tittman, therefore, is cited to prove that which he does *not* prove. And here, I may observe, by the way—if our Lord’s forms of expression were “unheard of”—by what means can we so safely venture to ascertain their meaning, as by studying them in connexion with the context of the discourse to which they belong; by studying them with intelligence, with fairness of mind—and, above all, with an utter disregard of *hermeneutical principles*—at least, the hermeneutical principles of Dr Wiseman? In the last place, I have carefully examined Tittman’s Commentary on St John, at the place in question, to ascertain whether there was any pretence for attributing to him so absurd a sentiment, as we have just been considering. No such pretence can be discovered. On the contrary, we find enough to convince us that the learned commentator would have rejected such a notion with contempt. In page 273, he observes, “Here we have a remarkable manner of speech: *to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ*; which, without doubt, is equivalent to that used by our Lord v. 51, namely: *to eat bread, to eat him, as the bread of life*; for to each is assigned the same efficacy, namely: *not to die, to live for ever, to have everlasting life*. But in *explaining* that manner of speech interpreters greatly differ.” Moreover he afterwards gives these expressions a



purely spiritual signification\*. All that I mean is, that Dr Wiseman's sentence, respecting Tittman, was so constructed, as to lead to an entire misapprehension of the subject...The learned lecturer mentions "the variety of interpretations among Protestant writers on this discourse," as a good proof of its obscurity, when figuratively explained. A little reflection would have induced him to avoid this argument; for he is well aware that as great a variety of interpretations might be selected from commentators belonging to the infallible Church.

Dr Wiseman's next observation on the same passage is presented in the following terms:

"In these words, our Lord makes a distinction between eating his body and drinking his blood: a distinction without any real signification or force, if he be not speaking of the real presence; for to partake of the blood of Christ by faith, adds nothing to the idea of partaking of his body." (p. 119.)

A little reflection, again, would certainly have had the effect of preventing the appearance of this argument. To the laity of the Church of

\* "Jam hic habemus modum loquendi notabilem: *edere carnem et bibere sanguinem Christi*; qui haud dubiè æquipollet ei, quo usus erat Dominus, v. 51. nempe: *comedere panem*, sive, *Jesum comedere*; *tanquam panem vitæ*; nam utrique eadem vis tribuitur, scilicet: *μη ἀποθάνη, ζήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*, et, *ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον*. Sed in explicando illo modo loquendi valdè dissentiunt interpretes."...In p. 276, he writes: "Cæterum non amplius videtur esse dubitatio apud nostros, nec apud virum doctum esse potest, in hoc loco Dominum nullo modo respexisse ad ritum sacræ cœnæ, neque adeo locutum esse de manducatione sacramentali, ut solemus loqui in Dogmaticis, sed spirituali. Est enim totus locus allegoricus; quare nec hic accipi aliter potest."



Rome, the Eucharist is administered by means of bread only;—and by that Church all are held accursed who do not believe that under that form, Christ is received entire—flesh and blood and soul and divinity. So that if there is any one more especially obnoxious to the charge of maintaining that “to partake of the blood of Christ—adds nothing to the idea of partaking of his body”—it is the Roman Catholic divine. Of all the arguments which Dr Wiseman has employed, this has surprised me the most.

The next argument turns upon “the emphatic asseveration” *Verily, verily*. I will only say that I really have read it. My patience of investigation although great—as this volume will testify—is not equal to the task of evincing, by a formal proof, that a sentence with a figurative meaning may be as important, as a sentence with a literal meaning; and that “the asseveration” may be with as great propriety prefixed to a sentence of the former kind, as to one of the latter kind. There is another consideration which restrains me from observing upon the discussion now alluded to. I have already pointed out, in Dr Wiseman’s volume, as grievous misrepresentations as can be imagined to exist in any work whatever—such misrepresentations in fact forming the ground of his hypothesis respecting the sixth chapter of St John. Now the author has, in this place, once more indulged in the most offensive language, with regard to our Lord’s conduct—sup-

posing him not to have acted on the principles laid down in the lectures on the Eucharist. The consequence is, that I shrink from the page which is defiled with such impropriety of language.

Dr Wiseman next attempts to find in v. 55—“For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed”—a confirmation of the literal meaning of the words *flesh* and *blood*—arising from the turn of expression, “meat *indeed*” and “drink *indeed*,” as indicating *material* food. In the Greek, we have ἀληθῶς, *truly*;—“my flesh is truly meat, and my blood is truly drink.” The argument is this—While the Jews understood our Saviour to speak of giving them his actual flesh to eat, we cannot suppose him to answer them, if they were wrong, that his flesh was *really*, or *truly* meat. Two great fallacies, which pervade the disquisition on John vi, annihilate the force of this argument. The first fallacy is—that the literal interpretation of the Jews is the same as Dr Wiseman’s interpretation;—the second, that our Lord then intended to correct the misapprehension of his meaning. But, not to dwell upon those fallacies, let us see whether the word ἀληθῶς, *truly*, leads to the idea of material food. There is, indeed, as the learned author has observed, some authority for the adjective ἀληθής, *true*, instead of the adverb ἀληθῶς, *truly*. He appears to prefer the adjective; nor have I the least objection to it on the present occasion—although, as a critic, I believe ἀληθῶς, *truly*, to be the right

reading. If an adjective had been used, ἀληθινός—a favourite word with St John—would probably have been adopted. Of the other Evangelists, St Luke alone uses ἀληθινός, and but once; while, in the Gospel, the first Epistle and the Apocalypse of St John, it occurs again and again. To state things accurately however, ἀληθής, which appears but once in St Matthew and once in St Mark, is frequently found in St John; whose remarkable use of ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής, and ἀληθινός, leads to some important reflections—if circumstances would allow me to expatiate on such a subject. But for our present purpose, if we take the adjective ἀληθής, we observe, in the Gospel of St John, such phrases as the following—"hath set to his seal that God is true," (iii. 33);—"the witness which he witnesseth of me is true," (v. 32);—"he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true," (vii. 18);—"he that sent me is true," (viii. 26);—which not only fail to render much assistance in our enquiry, but also tend to convince us that ἀληθής is not the reading in John vi. 55.—If we have recourse to ἀληθινός, we shall have better success. In Luke xvi. 11, we find, "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the righteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches (τὸ ἀληθινὸν τίς ὑμῖν πιστεύσει)?" No one can imagine that any earthly possessions, of whatever kind, are here alluded to. On this subject, the late Roman Catholic commentator on the four Gospels thus writes: "If ye have been faith-



less stewards of the wealth of this world, do not expect that God will trust you with the wealth of the next." In John i. 9, we have, "That was the true light (τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν) which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;"—the true, the spiritual light being thus contradistinguished from the ordinary light of day. Again, in John iv. 23, we read, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers (οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταὶ) shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth;" indicating that the true worshipper would not be known by his attendance at Jerusalem or Gerizim—but by the spiritual nature of his worship, wheresoever he might be. Also, in John xv. 1, "I am the true vine" (ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή);—where the term *true* impresses the mind with something very remote from what is material. Moreover, St John applies the term ἀληθινός to the Deity, in a very remarkable manner; not only describing Him (xvii. 3) as *the only true God* (τὸν μόνον ἀληθινὸν Θεόν), but (1 Ep. v. 20) as HIM WHO IS TRUE, or THE TRUE ONE—TON ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟΝ: by such means appearing to convey the notion that, while insecurity and uncertainty are inherent in every thing here below, stability essentially belongs to God....Having thus briefly remarked upon the use of the adjective ἀληθινόν, I may now state that it is found—applied exactly as the preceding instances would lead us to expect—in the sixth chapter of St John. In v. 32, our Lord says, "My Father giveth you the true



bread (τὸν ἄρτον τὸν ἀληθινόν) from heaven :”—not the manna of Moses, which according to one mode of speech was said to be from heaven, but the true, spiritual, bread from heaven. In fact, Dr Wiseman might just as well interpret this “true bread,” as the “truly flesh” or the “flesh indeed,” in the latter part of the discourse—of material food.... The received reading, however, in v. 55, being ἀληθῶς, *truly* or *indeed*, we must see whether the usage with regard to this word will require or warrant a literal interpretation of the “flesh.” In John i. 47, when Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said, “Behold an Israelite indeed (ἀληθῶς Ἰσραηλῆτης) in whom is no guile.” Can any one imagine that our Lord then adverted to the unblemished descent of Nathanael, from the ancient patriarch? Alas, “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” He undoubtedly spoke of the individual before him, as one possessing qualities (implied in the term ἀληθῶς) which rendered him worthy of his lineage—“an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” The word is similarly employed in John viii. 31 : “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed (ἀληθῶς μαθηταί μου);” from which they might learn this lesson—that it was by their moral qualities, rather than by their external profession, that the true disciples would be estimated. Under such circumstances and to such purposes is the word ἀληθῶς employed; and I have not been able to dis-

cover a single instance of an adverse character. On the contrary, I very much doubt whether, throughout the New Testament, either ἀληθῶς or ἀληθινός is ever applied to objects of the senses, without communicating to those objects some new moral or spiritual signification. To any one, indeed, who will reflect upon the mode in which earthly things are there made the means of instruction in heavenly things, nothing can appear more preposterous than the notion that such words are added with the view of asserting the material reality of such objects. So far is the adverb, ἀληθῶς, from leading to a literal sense of the “flesh” and the “blood” in John vi, that any person, bearing in mind our Lord’s method of addressing his hearers, would at once infer that some figurative meaning was intended; and he would naturally look to the discourse in question, to decide that meaning. And his researches need not be very extensive. The true bread, he perceives, is bread from heaven—giving everlasting life. It is spiritual food—to be spiritually received. It is Christ himself, who is thus received. No wonder that this should be called the true bread. Again, the bread from heaven (v. 51) is the flesh of Christ; and therefore to partake of that bread is to partake of his flesh—nay more, (v. 53) is to eat his flesh and drink his blood—which (v. 55) are meat indeed, and drink indeed. This moreover (v. 57) is to partake of him—(v. 58) to partake of that bread which came down from heaven. We

thus find that as the true bread is that which came down from heaven and imparts everlasting life, so also are the “meat indeed” and the “drink indeed” so called, on account of their heavenly origin and their power of communicating eternal life.

On comparing the expressions in vv. 53—56, with the corresponding phrase in v. 57, there is a difference, upon which Dr Wiseman builds his next argument.—In the first-mentioned verses, our Lord speaks on this wise—“He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood”—in the 57th verse, he says, “He that eateth me.” If then, according to most Protestants, the former mode of expression alludes to his violent death—the same cannot be affirmed of the latter. And therefore expressions, manifestly designed to be equivalent, are not equivalent, on the Protestant plan of interpreting.—Now whenever our Lord, whether in direct terms or in figurative language, spoke of believing on him, no one can fail to perceive that he must have meant a faith co-extensive with the objects made known to his hearers. A faith which might be accepted from the generality of the people could scarcely be deemed sufficient in his immediate disciples. How imperfect was the faith of the disciples themselves respecting our Lord and his purposes, during his sojourn among them, compared with what it was after his resurrection—and still more so, compared with the nature and extent of their faith, after the day of Pentecost. Supposing, then,



the discourse in question to relate to faith, why may we not conceive him to allude to faith in himself—as a being sent from God—as a divinely-appointed instructor of mankind in the duties of this life, in connexion with another—as the promised Messiah—as the Saviour of the world, by his death and passion:—with the design that all these particulars, as by degrees made known, should become the objects of their faith? Is there, besides, any thing incredible in the notion that, towards the close of such a discourse, he should use terms which would subsequently be found most applicable to that event, upon which so much depended? And with regard to the expression “he that eateth me,” we ought to consider that it is *the last* which refers directly to himself; and being more *general* in its character, may be taken, in its figurative signification, as comprehending the whole of what had preceded on the subject. In fine, I cannot perceive that the learned author has here thrown difficulties in the way of any Protestant interpretation that is sanctioned by good authority.

We now pass on to the last portion of our Lord’s reply (v. 58); in which, after having, as we have seen, mentioned (first) his flesh and blood, and (then) himself, as the food which would enable those who partook of it to have eternal life—he connected the subject with all that he had before declared respecting the bread from heaven:—“This



is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." These closing words, as well of the whole discourse as of the reply to the Jews, demand the most serious attention, with regard to their bearing upon what had preceded. "Our fathers," said the Jews, v. 31, "did eat manna in the desert: as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat." By this reference of the Jews to the Old Testament, the topic already entered upon was presented in a form—"bread from heaven"—which appears to have given that peculiar character which distinguishes the subsequent observations. Our Lord showed that the bread in that manner alluded to was not the true bread from heaven; that he was come to give the true bread from heaven; that he was himself that bread; that it was spiritual food, to be received by faith in him—the effect being everlasting life. In the midst of his address (vv. 49, 50) he reminded his hearers of their own allusion to the Old Testament: "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead: this is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." And when, to the primary idea of *himself* as the bread from heaven, he had added that of his own flesh and blood, as the means of eternal life—he reverted to *himself*, as the food by which a man was to live—declared once more (v. 58) that that was "the bread which came down from heaven"—

and finally reminded the Jews of the distinction between bread from heaven according to their own notions of it, and that which really deserved the name: "Not as your fathers did eat, manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever."—If there be a person who, after weighing all this, can for a moment hesitate to admit that the eating and drinking spoken of throughout this discourse is entirely spiritual, such a person is, in my opinion, not to be convinced that any part of Scripture is to be spiritually understood. But the reader will naturally enquire, What is Dr Wiseman's opinion of the subject, as viewed with reference to this 58th verse? To such an enquiry, I am not enabled to return an answer. I have, in fact, now to demand belief, when I affirm that Dr Wiseman, while professing to give a distinct analysis of our Lord's reply, which extends from v. 53 to v. 58, has actually passed over the 58th verse, although of the utmost importance towards the right understanding of the discourse, without the slightest notice. Now some people, in commenting upon the matter, would dwell upon the dishonesty and disingenuousness of such a proceeding. My disposition leads me to lament the unhappy condition of the individual, who has had recourse to the expedient. To him, truth in religion must have become as nothing—the support of an opinion, every thing. Literary attainments, I would hope, have a general tendency to cherish higher feelings and better principles. If we

can discover no such feelings and principles in the case under review—let us, before we entirely condemn the individual, reflect upon the sort of Ecclesiastical discipline to which he owes the character of his mind.

We now proceed to consider the effects of the discourse, and our Lord's subsequent conduct to his disciples, as detailed from v. 60 to v. 69....Beyond all doubt, the discourse gave great offence, even among those who were so far attached to our Saviour's cause as to be called his disciples—that term being frequently not restricted to the twelve: for we read (v. 60), “Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?” We cannot indeed but be aware that a considerable number of the expressions which had been employed, if understood in their strictest and most literal sense, must have excited extremely painful feelings. It is moreover acknowledged, on all hands, that such expressions were so understood, and produced such consequences. On these points there is no dispute. From what is thus universally conceded, Dr Wiseman draws two conclusions: “1. That no doctrine but that of the Real Presence, supposed to have been taught by our Saviour, could have elicited this strong form of repulsive dissatisfaction at his words; 2. That the preceding discourse had only served to encrease the feelings expressed in their former enquiry, ‘How can this



man give us his flesh to eat?' In other words, after the reply of our Lord, they were more convinced than ever, that he spoke of the real manducation of his flesh\*." To the first of these conclusions, I reply—that if the Jews took in its most literal sense that which our Lord meant to be understood figuratively, the effect upon their minds is sufficiently accounted for. To the second, I reply, that our Lord, in leaving such gross misapprehensions in the minds of the Jews, did no more than we know he did on other occasions. But to say the truth there is, in this place, a perplexity of thought, arising from, what I have often pointed out, the strange and unwarrantable substitution of the sacrament of the Eucharist, instead of the carnal eating and drinking understood by the Jews. Whatever objection may exist in the mind, to the nature of the sacramental eating and drinking as maintained by Dr Wiseman, he must allow that such objection is of a very different kind from that felt by the Jews, to the eating and drinking, in its most offensive sense. In short, Dr Wiseman's sacramental interpretation must have been much farther removed, from Jewish comprehension, than, we may be quite certain, the spiritual interpretation could have been; and thus, the want of express explanation, from our Lord, is much more adverse to Dr Wiseman's view of the subject than to the Protestant view.

\* Lectures, p. 123.



Many of our Lord's disciples, as we have seen (v. 60), were offended at his saying; and we are informed (v. 61) that, "when Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it," he deigned to take notice of the subject of their complaints. Now I think we should naturally expect that, in such a case, our Lord's observations would have some relation to those parts of his discourse which had excited the greatest discontent. What, then, were the points mainly objected to? We read in vv. 41, 42:

"The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?"

We read also in v. 52:

"The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Such were the principal grounds of opposition to his doctrine; and the following are the observations (vv. 61—63) with regard to their murmurs:

"Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

We have now the circumstances of the case fairly before us. The first objection was, that our Lord had said, "I came down from heaven:"—his observation now is, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"...The

second objection was, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"—his observation now is, "The flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you are spirit and truth." I will not suppose, till compelled to do so, that any rational person, who has seen these passages thus brought together, can doubt of the reference which they respectively have to each other. But that such reference was intended, appears from another consideration. When the Jews first murmured at the assertion of his having come down from heaven, he answered (vv. 43, 44), "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." To this he alludes in his final observations (vv. 64, 65). "But there are some of you that believe not....Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." If I mistake not, I have now proved, as distinctly as any thing of the kind can be proved, that our Lord's final observations refer to the two points which had been the most offensive to his hearers. A moment's attention to each of those observations will not, I trust, be thrown away.

The first objection of the Jews was, that he, whose father and mother they knew, had said, "I came down from heaven." The corresponding observation is, "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" We can imagine that this observa-

tion, although not without obscurity, would certainly re-affirm his former claim, of having come down from heaven; and intimate, at the same time, the probability of their beholding his ascent to where he was before. Whatever difficulty they might have felt, whatever offence they might have taken, they were to consider what effect such an event would have upon their minds. We are to recollect that he was addressing those who had witnessed, more than the people of other districts, his “mighty works;” and, as it were, calling upon them to weigh, against his apparently human birth, so signal a proof of his heavenly origin, in addition to the various miracles he had wrought. He leaves them, however, to determine for themselves whether, even in that case, they would believe in him. Our Lord, as in the instance before us, generally spoke with great reserve, of his death, resurrection and ascension; and we may here remark that indirect method of expression—*the Son of man*—by which he frequently designated himself, when touching upon those subjects. A remarkable proof of the reserve here mentioned is afforded by St Mark (ix. 9, 10) in connexion with his account of the transfiguration; on which occasion, our Lord had with him the three disciples, Peter, James and John. “And as they came down from the mountain,” says the Evangelist, “he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till THE SON OF MAN were risen from the dead.



And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean." Here we find even the three favoured disciples completely at a loss, when they heard our Lord speaking of *the Son of man rising from the dead*. The connexion between the descent from heaven as treated of in the discourse, and the ascent as intimated in v. 62, will be strongly confirmed by the passages adduced in the preceding section (pp. 143—146), relating to our Lord's coming forth from the Father, and going again to the Father. Moreover, in the gradual developement, to his disciples, of events so declaratory of his divine nature, we see how little the minds of people were prepared for such information; and are enabled to account for the hypothetical and indirect mode of expression adopted by our Lord in the 62d verse. I have dwelt the longer upon this subject, not only because it leads to what I believe the correct interpretation of John vi, but because it is of great importance in other points of view. Dr Wiseman explains the 62d verse without reference to any particular part of the discourse; stating that our Lord's "object is to refer his auditors to a great and striking proof, which he was to give, that he had divine authority to teach, and that his words were to be believed whatever difficulties they might contain." This explanation is deemed, by the learned author, highly favourable to his own interpretation of the 6th chapter of St John; but as



I am not aware of any opinion among Protestants, that the discourse could appear otherwise than difficult to those who heard it, I perceive no reason, on that ground, why a Protestant should be averse to the explanation. I cannot adopt it, because it does not make our Lord's observation bear in the least upon the objections which had been expressly urged; and if I do not mistake, this will soon appear to be the circumstance, which recommended the explanation to Dr Wiseman.

From the 62d verse, referring to the objection in v. 42, I now proceed to the 63d verse, referring, as I conceive, to the objection in v. 52. Objection: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Observation: "It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Here then "the spirit" is opposed to "the flesh." Life—doubtless eternal life—is communicated by "the spirit:" in that respect, "the flesh" profiteth nothing. Even supposing these declarations to have merely a general reference to the preceding discourse, do they not enforce a spiritual interpretation of the whole? And when referred, as I think they cannot but be referred, to the objection recorded in the 52d verse, they prove that, whatever images might have then been derived from the sustentation of the body, the real meaning was, that the spiritual life could only be given and maintained by the spirit of Christ. Besides, how aptly

do the concluding expressions—"the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life"—refer to all that he had previously declared, of himself and his doctrines, being, through faith on the part of his hearers, the certain source of everlasting life.

For myself, I do not easily understand how any one can imagine that, when our Lord addressed those who had taken offence at certain parts of the discourse which had just been finished, he did not expressly advert to those parts; and I certainly could not beforehand have thought it possible for human credulity to believe that when, in that explanatory address, he used the word "flesh," he did not employ it with specific reference to the objection to giving his flesh to eat. In both these cases, however, Dr Wiseman has adopted that course which is so difficult to comprehend. The probability, indeed, is, that, to avert the consequences of such reference with regard to the "flesh," he decided against reference altogether; and most undoubtedly, he has produced, as will soon be manifest, an explanation, of our Saviour's words, which entirely frees the address from connexion with the preceding discourse. This explanation will make its appearance in the course of some objections, to the argument from the 63d verse—"The flesh profiteth nothing, &c."—in favour of a spiritual interpretation of "He that eateth my flesh;"—to which objections, I now go on to consider what can be

offered in reply. The first objection assumes the following shape:

“There is not a single instance in the Old or New Testament in which flesh means the literal sense of words. Yet this is necessary for us to understand, by *the spirit*, their figurative or spiritual signification. In some instances, indeed, the spirit is thus opposed to the *letter*; but no one will consider flesh an equivalent term to this, especially in a chapter wherein it has been used twenty times in its ordinary meaning.” (p. 140.)

As I do not suppose “the flesh” to mean “the letter,” in the case before us, I have, directly, no concern with this argument; which yet is worth attention, on at least two accounts. 1. The argument indicates a conviction, that the word “flesh,” in v. 63, must be taken in what he calls its ordinary meaning—namely, of real flesh—in which it has been used in the chapter. The learned author has therefore fixed that meaning for his own use—whatever import he may assign to v. 63. 2. We are informed that the word “flesh” has been used *twenty times* in this sixth chapter of St John. Now, from a love of accuracy, I wish to observe that, prior to this 63d verse, the word had been used just five times by our Lord, and just once by the Jews. Not that I deem this an extraordinary exaggeration in Dr Wiseman; whose imagination is somewhat of a romantic cast.

The second objection is couched in these terms:

“If by *the flesh* [in v. 63] we are to understand the material flesh of Christ, by the spirit we must understand *his* spirit. If so, in what way does the phrase explain that the



foregoing words are to be taken figuratively? For the assertion that Christ's spirit gives us life, is surely not equivalent to a declaration, that whatever had been said about eating his flesh and drinking his blood is to be understood of faith." (p. 140.)

Either there is no difficulty here, or I cannot perceive it. My notion is that some subtile meaning is attached to the word, *equivalent*; but I write with great diffidence. And yet, notwithstanding my uncertainty, I will say this—that if the flesh profiteth nothing, then can the literal eating of the flesh profit nothing. If again the spirit gives life, it cannot be by a literal eating and drinking: it must be by a spiritual receiving; that is, by faith.

The next objection furnishes us with a noble specimen of Dr Wiseman's ambidextrous management of hermeneutical principles. In the preceding page, the reader must have observed that the learned author had affixed the literal meaning to the word "flesh," as its proper signification in v. 63. Having no longer occasion for that literal meaning—becoming, in fact, a good deal embarrassed by it, when employed in fabricating an interpretation of the whole verse—he betakes himself without scruple to the Epistle to the Romans, in quest of another meaning, more suited to his purpose. He there finds that "*the flesh* signifies the corrupted dispositions and weak thoughts of human nature; and *the spirit*, the sentiments of man, as elevated and ennobled by grace:" adding, "If you desire more proofs of this being the only true signification of



these terms in Scripture, you may turn to the following [long list of] texts." Now, with regard to this explanation of the 63d verse, I shall only remark that, if I were desired to produce, from commentators on Scripture, what I considered to be the worst interpretation—the most inapplicable to the text attempted to be illustrated—I should despair of finding any thing more unfortunate than what has now been proposed by the learned author. After these displays of consistency as a writer, and skill as an interpreter, Dr Wiseman occupies two pages with references to *Philological Works*, on the meaning of the word "flesh," in the New Testament. I shall not engage in that investigation: being satisfied that the learned lecturer had both the discernment and the inclination, to avail himself of the best meaning which those works afforded. My object will now be, to show how much more judiciously he would have acted, if he had adhered to the interpretation of the 63d verse, to be found in Roman Catholic writers of great repute, instead of devising an interpretation for himself. Estius, as the reader is already aware, was of opinion that the Jews erroneously interpreted the eating of the flesh in the grossest possible sense. According to that view of the subject, he interprets the 63d verse; and with reference to the latter part—"the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life"—he writes to the following effect: "The words which I spoke to you, concerning eating my flesh and

drinking my blood, are spiritual and to be spiritually understood; and when so understood, bestow life. So that it is not the corporal or sacramental eating, but the carnal, which is excluded by these words\*." I cannot compliment Estius on the accuracy of his logic in introducing the word *corporal* in the last sentence; but with Estius I have no controversy: my only design is to point out how much more intelligible and to the purpose is *his* doctrine than that of Dr Wiseman.

Thus also on v. 63 writes the annotator on the Rhemish Testament:

*"The flesh profiteth nothing.* If this speech were spoken in the sense of the Sacramentaries, it would take away Christ's incarnation, manhood and death, no less than his corporal presence in the sacrament; for if his flesh were not profitable, all these things were vain. Therefore Christ denieth not his own flesh to be profitable, but that their gross and carnal conceiting of his words, of his flesh, and of the manner of eating the same, was unprofitable. Which is plain by the sentence following, where he warneth them, that his words be spirit and life, of high mystical meaning, and not vulgarly and grossly to be taken, as they took them."

According to the foregoing extract, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant agree in believing that the Jews were wrong in their carnal interpretation, and that our Lord intended to lead them to a mode of thinking more worthy of the subject. It is true,

\* "Verba quæ locutus sum vobis de manducandâ meâ carne, et bibendo sanguine, spiritualia sunt, et spiritualiter intelligenda, atque eo modo intellecta conferunt vitam. Non igitur his verbis corporalis seu sacramentalis manducatio excluditur, sed carnalis." In lib. iv. Sent. p. 120.

the Roman Catholic and the Protestant are there made to differ, as to the mode pointed out; but how much better is this plain account of the matter, than that perplexity in which Dr Wiseman has contrived to involve the whole question, respecting the 6th chapter of St John. The fact is, that, in many important particulars, the learned author is as directly opposed to leading writers of his own communion, as to the Protestants themselves. He has frequently, in the course of his lectures, laid great stress upon the diversity of sentiment, as to this chapter, existing among Protestants. I have now shown, and could still show, to an extent which would probably surprise even Dr Wiseman, how little unanimity there really is, in a Church calling itself infallible.

On the whole, we conclude that our Lord, in these final observations, adverted in three respects to his previous discourse: 1. As to his descent from heaven, which he confirmed by a hint that he might return thither;—2. As to the eating of his flesh, which he appears to have interpreted spiritually;—3. As to the declaration, that “no man could come unto him, except it were given unto him of his Father;” a sentiment which he distinctly ratified. We now come to the result, of this final reference to the discourse; which is thus stated by Dr Wiseman:

“The consequence of this conference is, that ‘many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.’ Can we



suppose that Jesus would have allowed things to come to this extremity, that he would cast away for ever, *many* of his disciples, when an explanation in two words would have saved them? And yet even this did he, if the Protestant interpretation of his discourse be true." (p. 126.)

The preceding extract involves a silent assumption of that which cannot possibly be believed to be in accordance with fact—namely, that the offence which had been given, by the mention of the flesh and blood, was the only cause of the alienation of the persons there referred to. Any one, conversant with the Gospels, must be aware that, whatever miracles were wrought by our Lord, the people could not endure the idea of his claiming a nature superior to the human. Any declaration, which seemed to imply a heavenly origin, was the signal for undisguised discontent. The forgiveness of sins was considered to belong to God alone; and when our Lord exercised the power of forgiving sins, the people murmured within themselves. On one occasion (John v. 18), "the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." So far indeed as I recollect, the only instances, in which "they took up stones to cast at him," were those, in which (John viii. 58) he asserted that he had existed before Abraham, and (John x. 30) that "he and his Father were one." There was, in all this, that which, in their estimation, constituted blasphemy; and, according to their law, an individual guilty of



blasphemy was to be put to death. On that charge he was finally condemned by the High Priest; and his crucifixion and death were held by the Jews to be full proof that he was not, as he had affirmed, the Son of God. When therefore, (John vi. 32-40) he began to dwell upon his descent from heaven, and upon God as *The Father* and himself as *The Son*, their prejudices were roused. They knew the humility of his origin and condition; and revolted at the thought of his having come down from heaven. This, then, was the primary cause of the alienation of many of his disciples. And when he afterwards appeared to confirm this notion of descent from heaven, by an intimation that they might "see the Son of man ascend up where he was before," I think it cannot but be admitted, that this intimation, of what *we know* was to take place, must at the time have tended to increase their alienation of mind. Still, *the truth* was shadowed out to them; and our Lord knew that there were, among those who professed to be his disciples, many who did not believe—and whose dispositions would not then permit them to believe.

The second grievance is sufficiently apparent: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?—And although I suppose our Lord to have given, subsequently to the discourse, a spiritual interpretation, which would have been sufficiently clear to the intelligent and well-affectioned, I cannot imagine it to have satisfied those who, for various rea-

sons, were adverse to the doctrines which had been enforced.

A third ground of complaint, as I apprehend, existed in our Lord's hint, to the people who murmured, that *their* discontent was not likely to be removed. (v. 43) "Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Such was his language in the discourse. In the observations subsequent to the discourse, the same sentiment was strongly confirmed. (v. 64) "But there are some of you," he then declared, "that believe not....Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Whatever other inferences may be drawn from these expressions, one thing is certain—namely, that our Lord gave the (so called) disciples to understand, that as he had previously considered, so did he still consider them to be for the most part unfitted, by their temper and disposition, for faith in him. Such appears to me to be the real state of the case, with regard to those disciples, our Lord's discourse, and his supplementary observations; and I cannot but think that it fully accounts for the result, as recorded by the Evangelist: "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."....The reader will, doubtless, bear in mind that our Lord was not, according to Dr Wiseman's notions, one of those who because "they will lead, must also, in a considerable degree, follow: who

must conform their propositions to the taste, talent and disposition, of those whom they wish to conduct:”—nor yet—a popular preacher “intent upon carrying his point.” The great purposes of our Lord’s mission were to be accomplished by means very far removed from such temporizing policy; and I strongly suspect that the learned author has yet much to learn—much that easily *may* be learned—with regard both to those purposes, and the means by which they really were accomplished.

It is now time to return to the extract last given from Dr Wiseman. “Can we suppose,” he there writes, “that Jesus would have allowed things to have come to this extremity, that he would have cast away for ever, many of his disciples, when an explanation in two words would have saved them? And yet even this did he, if the Protestant interpretation of his discourse be true.” Now, in the first place, we are not justified in affirming that those disciples *were* “cast away for ever.” Their minds might, in process of time, be brought into a more hopeful state. In the second place, no one who has read the last three paragraphs can induce himself to believe that “an explanation in two words *would* have saved them.” The evil could not then be so easily eradicated. In the last place, Dr Wiseman’s interpretation—for it is not, and I cannot call it, the Roman Catholic interpretation—stands more in need of the “explanation in two words” than the Protestant interpretation. Of the



spiritual interpretation, the people might have had some idea—of the corporal, sacramental interpretation, they could have had no idea.

From our Saviour's conduct towards the disciples in general, we proceed to his conduct towards the twelve; which, in Dr Wiseman's estimation, "affords us additional assurance of the correctness of the literal interpretation of his discourse." In elucidation of this view of the matter, we have the following not very lucid remarks:

"He asks them, after the departure of the other disciples, 'Will ye also go?' Whoever reads the answer which Peter gives to this touching question, must be convinced that the Apostles were manifestly perplexed as to the nature of their Divine Master's intentions. For Peter does not even allude to the doctrines taught, but throws himself entirely upon his belief in our Saviour's authority, and answers accordingly—'Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.' Now, when we consider, that to them it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God (Luke viii. 10), it must appear extraordinary, that even to them he should not have condescended to give any explanation of this singular enigma, which Protestants suppose to have been uttered. By one only hypothesis can we solve this difficulty: by acknowledging that they really understood him right, but that he spoke of a mystery which only required faith—and *that* they had clearly professed through Peter—but which could not receive any explanation, so as to bring it within the comprehension of reason." (p. 126.)

We here find, first, "that the Apostles were manifestly perplexed as to the nature of their Divine Master's intentions"—as unfolded, I presume, in his discourse:—lastly, "that they really understood him right"—although "he spoke of *a mys-*



tery," which could not be brought "within the comprehension of reason." Midway between these odd notions, we are told that to the Apostles "it was given to know *the mysteries* of the kingdom of God." Why then, on Dr Wiseman's own principles, did not the Apostles receive some intimation that there *was* a mystery, even if its exact nature had not been declared? All this is surely passing strange. After the main portion, of these lectures on the 6th chapter of St John, has been occupied by arguments upon arguments, to prove that nothing but the strictest literal Jewish interpretation, of our Lord's words respecting his flesh, can possibly be admitted—we are now informed that "he spoke in a *mystery*"—a mystery, of which no hint was afforded, even to those to whom "it was given to know *the mysteries* of the kingdom of God." My conjecture is—but in the midst of so perplexed a scheme of things, I may easily be wide of the mark—that the curious *hermeneutical* distinction (already noticed), between *understanding* and *comprehending*, was expressly devised for the paragraph which has now been laid before the reader. There, at least, the distinction is played off; and with what difficulty do we detect the artifice. The argument indeed, of the whole work, is almost entirely conducted by the practice of intellectual sleight.... But besides the "mystery" not "within the comprehension of reason," according to Dr Wiseman's view of the matter—mention is made, in the same

paragraph, of the “singular enigma” which exists, according to the Protestant view. Of that enigma, Dr Wiseman thinks it “extraordinary that our Lord should not have condescended to give any explanation.” Having already discussed this topic, I shall leave the reader to decide with whom—that is, whether with Dr Wiseman or myself—rests the *most* “singular enigma;” and with whom, consequently, the most urgent call to show, that some intelligence was afforded, of its hidden meaning...With regard to our Lord’s appeal to the twelve, “Will ye also go away?”—it referred solely to the conduct of those who had deserted him; and naturally enough, Peter’s reply, for himself and his brethren, referred simply to the same. Whatever offence others may take, and whatever course they may adopt, we will adhere to thy cause:—“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” What strange subtilty must it be, that can find an argument, in favour of the Real Presence, from the fact that “Peter did not even allude to the doctrines taught” in the discourse!...The obscurity which, as every one must have felt, envelopes Dr Wiseman’s disquisition on the 6th chapter of St John, arises in a great measure from his manner of treating, as identical, two things which are as distinct as possible: I mean, the literal eating of the flesh, as understood when the discourse was delivered—and the corporal eating in the sacrament, as understood by himself. How any Roman

Catholic—in opposition to the declared sentiments of so many eminent writers of his own Church—should have drawn up a work, on the very principle of identifying things so different, without a single word in defence or even explanation of his proceeding—can scarcely be accounted for otherwise, than by supposing that he expected some great advantage to his argument, from the uncertainty which would thereby be spread over the whole subject. The consequence, however, is, that throughout the work there are paragraphs, so intricate and inconsistent from beginning to end, that I very much doubt whether the author himself, with the assistance of the ablest casuist whom the Church of Rome can produce, could give anything like a clear account of their objects. In fine, during my journey with Dr Wiseman, I have too frequently been reminded of the expedition of Æneas and the Sibyl—

*Ibant obscuri solâ sub nocte per umbram,  
Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna.  
Quale per incertam Lunam sub luce malignâ  
Est iter in sylvis: ubi cœlum condidit umbrâ  
Juppiter, et rebus nox abstulit atra colorem.*

I shall here offer a very few remarks upon what appears to be Dr Wiseman's opinion—namely, that the Apostles were to have all mysteries explained to them. The notion may produce an impression, free neither from error nor mischief—respecting various passages in the Gospels.... There is, indeed, one text, sufficient of itself to show how very far from the truth the supposition really must be. When



our Lord was with his disciples, *for the last time* before his crucifixion, he addressed them in the following remarkable terms (John xvi. 12): "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." These words assuredly imply that many mysteries, relating to the kingdom of God, must have been left unexplained, even at that late period of the intercourse between the Apostles and their Divine Master.... Remarkable instances of important matters left in obscurity, in addition to those given in the course of this work, might easily be produced; but I shall confine myself to two; and shall present them, along with the observations of the recent Roman Catholic commentator on the Gospels, of whose volume I shall be considered, I trust, as having already made good use. From those instances, the reader will be enabled to see how much more correct and enlarged are the views of the *Roman Catholic* commentator alluded to, than the views (which it has frequently pained me to point out) of the *Roman Catholic* lecturer on the Eucharist.

In Luke xxii. 35—38, we find our Lord addressing his disciples, and exhorting "him that hath no sword," to "sell his garment, and buy one."... "For I say unto you," he adds, "that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he



said unto them, It is enough." On v. 38, the note is as follows:

"The meaning of this and the last three verses is, that, whilst Christ was with them, he took care that they should not be in want or danger: now that he was about to be taken from them, they must look to their own safety. They misunderstood him, and took his words literally. His reply, 'It is enough,' showed that they were in error, but that he did not think it worth while to expose that error at the moment."

On Matthew xiii. 10—where in answer to the Apostles' question—"Why speakest thou unto them [meaning the people of Capernaum] in parables?"—our Lord replied, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given"—the same commentator thus writes:

"To account for this, it has been ingeniously remarked, that the parables in question were predictive of events to happen after the establishment of Christianity, and that consequently the knowledge of their meaning could not be, at that time, of any importance to the great body of his hearers. But to me his answer to the Apostles appears far more comprehensive. It applies to his manner of teaching, with a very few exceptions, through the whole course of his mission. *He did not speak to them otherwise than in parables*; either directly in parables specified as such, or indirectly in parabolic language. All his conversation abounds with allusions and allegories; there is perpetually a secret meaning wrapt up in it, which renders it mysterious and enigmatical: whether he addresses the multitudes in Galilee, or the learned and intelligent Nicodemus, he speaks in the same figurative style, above the comprehension, not only of the vulgar but also of the teachers in Israel. At the conclusion of his last discourse to his Apostles, before his passion, he states that he will then lay aside his parabolic language, and speak openly; and proceeds to say, in plain words, that

as he came from the Father into the world, so is he about to leave the world, and go to the Father. This they understood, and instantly exclaim, as if in surprise, *Now thou speakest plainly, and utterest no parable....* It appears, from the answer in the present chapter, that when he spoke in this manner he had no intention of being perfectly understood. And of that he gives a reason, which he often repeats, as if it were the key to his mysterious language in general: *to him who hath, there shall be given; but from him who hath not, even what he hath shall be taken away.* Enough had been given to the Jews, and no use made of it: he would no longer throw his pearls to swine. Even what they had, should be taken from them, and be given to the Gentiles. But why then did he address them in parables at all? He was, as he describes himself, the sower sowing his seed, and then leaving it in the soil, to fructify till the time of harvest. His sayings, though not understood, would remain in the memory of his hearers: in the course of a few months, the time of harvest, the establishment of his church after his ascension, would come; and then his servants would be sent to gather the wheat into his barn. Then the fruit of these lessons would be seen, in the conversion of the poor in spirit, the simple, the docile and virtuous, while the rest of their countrymen would remain and die in their incredulity."

From these comments—which I recommend as correctives to numberless errors, both in principles and examples, to be found in Dr Wiseman's book—I proceed to a reason, of which the learned author has taken some notice, for *not* understanding our Lord's discourse, of the Eucharist. The force of the reason is apparent:—that sacrament was not then instituted; and therefore, what was required of those who heard the discourse could not be performed by them. On this subject, I find the following observations by the learned author:

“Our Lord’s important conversation with Nicodemus took place before Baptism was instituted, and yet the necessity of it is there declared. Now, no one has ever thought of denying that the regeneration there mentioned referred to baptism, on the ground that this sacrament had not yet been instituted. The discourse in the sixth chapter of St John, therefore, stands in the same relation to the institution of the Eucharist, as the conference with Nicodemus does with the institution of baptism.” (p. 134.)

There are some important differences between the two cases here supposed to be similar. In the conference with Nicodemus, our Lord at once described the method by which alone a man could enter into the kingdom of God—that is, I conclude, become a true member of the Christian society about to be established. The language employed, therefore, had nothing immediately preceding, by which it could be illustrated. In the discourse to the Jews, the expressions in question occurred in the midst of an account, conveyed in figurative language, of that spiritual food by which a man might live for ever. Those expressions, therefore, would naturally receive illustration from the figurative character of the previous language.—Again, in the conference, our Lord, when a difficulty was raised, explained the term he had used; and that is our warrant for understanding that term, as we do, of baptism. In the discourse, our Lord, when a difficulty was raised, did *not* explain the term he had used; and that appears to me to be our warrant for understanding the term in that figurative sense which is peculiar to the preceding part of the



discourse—in connexion, indeed, with all that follows.—Moreover, at the time of the conference, the rite of baptism, as administered by John, had recently excited the greatest attention at Jerusalem; so that, in speaking of baptism by water, our Lord referred to what undoubtedly was perfectly familiar to his auditor. At the time of the discourse, there was nothing that could, in any way or by any possibility, suggest to the hearers the slightest notion of the Eucharist; so that it seems contrary to all just rules of interpretation for us to understand the expressions in debate, of the carnal reception of that sacrament. In a word, since, in the conference, there was an explanation of a difficulty, by reference to a well-known rite—and in the discourse, neither explanation nor express reference to a rite existing or designed to exist—the analogy between the two cases, so far as yet appears, is directly opposed to Dr Wiseman's sacramental views. For the better understanding of the subject, however, I subjoin a few remarks on baptism, *as an institution*, at the time of the conference with Nicodemus.

At the time of the conference, our Lord was in Jerusalem; whither he had gone, for the first time after the commencement of his ministration, to keep the Passover. Prior to that time, as we are informed (John i. 19), the Jews had “sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem,” to John the Baptist, “to ask him, Who art thou?” The circumstances, therefore, of John's baptism must then have been well known.



Moreover, our Lord had himself attested, in the most striking manner, the divine authority with which the rite was administered, by submitting to it in his own person—before he undertook his great work, and “manifested his glory.” He did this besides, as he thought it became him, for the purpose of fulfilling all righteousness; and so, taught his countrymen what was required of them in that respect. When he afterwards (Matt. xxi. 25) demanded, of “the chief priests and the elders of the people,” whether the baptism of John was “from heaven, or of men”—it is quite clear that he was aware that, in their consciences, they could not but be sensible of its heavenly origin—although, from the difficulties in which they were placed, they thought proper to evade the question. Still farther, John’s preaching was the preparation for the kingdom of God. So likewise was his baptism. He described himself (John i. 33) as “SENT to baptize with water.” Repentance was required for John’s baptism; and those who truly repented, and were baptized, had their sins forgiven. “John,” we are informed (Mark i. 4, 5), “did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.” Faith also was required; for (Acts xix. 4.) the people were to “believe on him which should come after him (John)” —that is, on

the Messiah who was at hand—who was among them—whenever the time of his manifestation should arrive\*. Nor were spiritual gifts entirely wanting to the baptism of John; for we find (Acts xviii. 25) Apollos, a man “instructed in the way of the Lord;” who, “being fervent in the spirit, spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.”... From this scriptural representation of John’s baptism, we cannot but infer that, although inferior to the baptism, committed by our Lord himself to the Apostles, after his resurrection, it was inferior in degree, rather than in nature; and that it was deemed to be of great moment, both as being the first initiatory rite appertaining to the new dispensation—and as conferring many important spiritual blessings. My belief then is that, when our Lord spoke of being “born of water and the spirit,” he not only alluded, by anticipation, to the sacrament of baptism thereafter to be instituted, before his departure unto the Father—but to the sacred rite so well known to the people of Jerusalem, and so worthy of being considered as the earnest of those higher privileges which were about to be con-

\* St Paul found at Ephesus “certain disciples,” who had been baptized unto John’s baptism. “Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him”—St Paul adds, “that is, on Jesus Christ.” It is evident from the whole Gospel history that John himself did not designate Jesus, as the Christ;—which also appears from the next words in the Acts, “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

ferred by similar means. But this is not all. Our Lord, in my opinion, alluded also to another baptism; which appears to have been designed to carry on what was begun by John; and to connect *his* baptism with that afterwards committed to the Apostles, when sent forth “into all the world”—to “all nations.” It seems, indeed, not improbable that the institution of baptism, *to be carried to that extent*, may have a reference to the baptisms previously existing in Judæa. Every reader of these pages must be aware that the baptism just mentioned, as *between* that of John, and that of the Apostles after the ascension, is the baptism administered by our Lord himself, by means of his disciples; and what I am now about to state affords a strong confirmation of the opinion, that our Lord, in his conference with Nicodemus, alluded primarily to those introductory baptisms. No sooner is the account of our Lord’s conversation with Nicodemus brought to a close, than the Evangelist proceeds thus: “After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judæa; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John’s disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest



witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." On this subject, John discoursed at some length; using as he spoke this remarkable expression touching our Lord: "He must increase, but I must decrease." At the termination of John's discourse, the Evangelist still pursues the subject of baptism: "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples) He left Judæa, and departed again into Galilee."...Now unless we are determined to act upon the principle of separating things which seem to have been designedly brought together, I see not how we can avoid the conclusion—that our Lord, in his conference with Nicodemus, referred first to the baptism of John, secondly to that which he was himself about to administer by his disciples, and through those two baptisms, to the final baptism to be administered by his Apostles, when they should no longer have his personal presence...."The discourse in the sixth chapter of St John," says Dr Wiseman, "stands in the same relation to the institution of the Eucharist, as the conference with Nicodemus does to the institution of baptism." This, indeed, is easily said; but will not be easily believed, by any one who has perused the preceding observations on the conference and the discourse. The contrast, between the circumstances of the two, is marked by characters not to be mistaken; and the objection to Dr Wise-



man's interpretation of the 6th chapter of St John—that our Lord was requiring of his hearers what no man among them could possibly perform—appears to be more formidable than ever, when viewed in the light afforded by the instructions to Nicodemus. In fact, the objection is insuperable; whereas the figurative interpretation of the Protestants presents no difficulty of the kind. When our Lord spoke of his flesh as given for the life of the world, he doubtless prophetically alluded, as he frequently had done on other occasions, to his passion; and he may also in this single instance have alluded to the institution intended to commemorate that event. Now, the principle of faith is coextensive with every doctrine as it becomes known, and every part of Christian duty; and will be more especially called forth by the more striking manifestations of our Saviour's love, and the more solemn acts of religious obedience. Spiritual nourishment, indeed, will always be thankfully received; but never so much so, as when we are contemplating the great sacrifice on the cross, and partaking of the symbols of the body and blood of Christ. By means therefore of a spiritual interpretation, our Lord's discourse is seen to be at once applicable to the hearers, at the time it was delivered—and to readers of all times. It is thus at unity with itself, and with the various discourses in which he enforced, in other language, the doctrine of faith in him—the Redeemer of the world—as the source of everlasting life.

The Roman Catholic Church—as will speedily be more particularly stated—does not require of its members the belief that the 6th chapter of St John is to be interpreted of the Eucharist; nor does the Protestant Church of England affirm that the same chapter is *not* to be interpreted of the Eucharist. My object has been to show that the debateable part of the chapter is to be understood spiritually, as well as the remainder. That part may be understood sacramentally likewise; and may be so understood, without any supposed transfer of material properties—any transubstantiation of bread into flesh, and of wine into blood—on the illogical plan of the Romanists—and with the advantage of facilitating the explanation of some of the terms employed. With regard to the different Protestant interpretations here alluded to, I give no opinion. Neither my time nor my limits suffice for an examination of the subject. Dr Wiseman, indeed, is glad to avail himself, when he can, of the assistance of those Protestants who have interpreted this discourse, of the Eucharist. With that design he has quoted the words of Dr Sherlock, in reply to the objection, that the discourse could not relate to the Eucharist, inasmuch as that sacrament was not then instituted. Dr Sherlock, it seems, thus writes :

“Our Saviour said a great many things to the Jews in his sermons, which neither they nor his own disciples could understand, when they were spoken, though his disciples understood them after he was risen.” (p. 133.)

The present volume affords many instances of things said by our Saviour, which were totally misapprehended at the time; but the question to be answered is this—In what case did he ever urge upon his hearers an observance upon which eternal life was suspended—and yet was impossible to be understood even if it could be fulfilled, and impossible to be fulfilled even if it could be understood? Dr Sherlock's argument indeed, although not satisfactory, has a merit, which Dr Wiseman's arguments seldom have, that of being perfectly intelligible. The learned author is manifestly glad to produce it, opposed though it be to his own notion, that the Jews *understood* the discourse. In discussing the argument, he once more introduces his fondly-cherished distinction between *understanding* and *comprehending*; and affirms that the Jews *understood* the matter well enough, but that they could make nothing of it in the way of comprehension. "I have never said that our Saviour was *bound* to answer the objections of the Jews"—was his language some time ago:—"Our Lord was *bound* to take care that they understood his words"—is his language now. There is in all this such an appearance of an attempt to "palter with us in a double sense," that I really cannot induce myself to employ any more words on the subject. From the same kind of feeling, I omit to notice several passages, in this fourth lecture, exhibiting as much perplexity of thought and as strange inconsistencies of opinion,



as I have had occasion to point out in any of the foregoing pages\*.

In the course of this investigation, I have given an example or two, of what I ventured to denominate recklessness, on the part of the learned author. I now add another, not less deserving the severest censure. Dr Hampden, in his 'Inaugural Discourse' at Oxford, had cited the 6th chapter of St John, as tending to prove *a real vital* presence of Christ in the Eucharist, but not a *corporal* presence. On this circumstance, Dr Wiseman thus animadvert:

"This quotation is strong enough to prove a *real* presence, but yet does not prove a *corporal* presence, which he tells us is rejected by his Church. Now, Jesus Christ exists in the body, from which he is no more separable. How words, which prove his *real* presence any where, exclude his *corporal* or bodily presence, it is not easy to understand. This real presence, according to the learned professor, is demonstrated by the assertion, that the flesh and blood, the constituents of a body, are there; and yet the real presence differs from a corporal presence, or from the presence of the body, whose flesh and blood *are* there. Christ is present, because he said 'This *is* my body;' and upon this we are to ground a doctrine that Christ is there, but not his body. Where in Scripture is this nice distinction drawn between a real, vital presence, and a corporal presence?" (p. 146.)

Whether, or not, the distinction, drawn by Dr Hampden, be a "nice distinction," I will not deter-

\* Dr Wiseman, in quoting from Dr Sherlock, calls him *the Bishop*. Now the author of the 'Discourse on Religious Assemblies,' from which the quotation is taken, was Dr William Sherlock, the Dean of St Paul's; who was the father of Dr Thomas Sherlock, the Bishop of London. There are in Dr Wiseman's volume many mistakes, in literary history, which might easily be corrected.



mine. It will be sufficient to point out "*where* in Scripture" it is drawn. In Matthew xviii. 20, we find our Lord assuring his disciples—"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them:"—assuredly by a *real*, although not a *corporal* presence. Again, in John xiv. 16, he addresses his disciples in the following terms: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." He was therefore speaking of the times subsequent to his ascension. He goes on: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you:"—by his spirit, we conclude, not by his body. But our Lord continues: "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also:"—*the vision*, here spoken of, being undoubtedly meant for the spiritual faculties, and not the bodily organ of sight. Our Saviour still goes on: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." In what way this manifestation was to take place we immediately learn; for we are informed that "Judas saith unto him (not Iscariot) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" The reply is most remarkable. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." The Son therefore would come unto him, as the Father

would come unto him.—And now, can such a paragraph, as the one last transcribed from Dr Wiseman, be assigned to any thing short of utter recklessness? If he had forgotten the passages of Scripture now cited—although it is difficult to conceive how he could do so—how could he overlook the promise given by our Lord to the Apostles, when authorizing them to go and baptize and teach all nations?—“Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” To my mind, there is something painful to think of, in Dr Wiseman’s incapacity or disinclination (which ever it may be) to distinguish between a real and a corporal presence. To what an injurious extent must objects of merely materialized existence have affected his perceptions of divine things!

Dr Johnson has somewhere avowed an opinion, that no credit is due to a rhetorician’s account of good or evil; an opinion which has preserved me from many a mistake. When perusing a treatise on a subject, the real merits of which can be discovered only by accurate investigation, I no sooner arrive at a piece of oratory, than I suspect that all is not right; and immediately endeavour to divest the materials employed, of their magnificent habiliments, in order to ascertain their intrinsic worth. Dr Wiseman, after a description of our Lord’s character as an instructor of the people, illustrates his views of the matter, by means of the discourse in the sixth chapter of St John; and undoubtedly

every thing looks very much to his own advantage, when coloured by that imaginative faculty to which I have already borne testimony. Towards the close of the first section, I noticed, with expressions of admiration, that power of mind, which could transform the people of Capernaum—a people on another occasion doomed to destruction by our Lord himself, for their evil deeds and perverse dispositions, and at the time addressed as selfishly regardless of the miracles they had witnessed—into multitudes listening, at the opening of his discourse, with “wonder, admiration and reverence.” Such was the representation of the people, given by the learned author at the outset of the enquiry; and now, at its termination, they are depicted by the same hand as “a crowd of ardent and enthusiastic hearers.”—Having finished his descriptions, he proceeds to show how ill the Protestant interpretation of the discourse, and how well his own, can be made to agree with our Lord’s character and that of his audience. For this purpose, he has brought together, and combined, in what he deemed the best mode to produce effect in each case, first, his various mistakes with regard to the Protestant interpretation, and then, the inconsistencies I have pointed out in his own. Without entering into the detail of these matters, I will present his method of treating the conclusion of the discourse, with reference to Protestants and to himself. When considering the Protestant view, he writes:



“By all these expressions (vv. 53—56) our Lord meant something quite different from what they thought; and the consequence was, that many of his disciples, shocked at the harshness of his doctrine, left him in disgust, and never more returned to his school. He let them depart, though [without?] one word of explanation, which, had he condescended to give it, would have saved them from this apostasy. Neither does he deem it proper to explain himself further to his chosen twelve.” (p. 130.)

When considering his own view—

“The Jews object the impossibility of his doing what he promises; and, according to his usual practice, he replies to them by repeating again and again what he had asserted, and insisting that it must be done. Many of his disciples still refuse to believe him, after these clear protestations; and he, with his customary firmness and indifference to mere popularity, suffers them to depart, content to preserve those who, with the faithful twelve, believe him even when they cannot comprehend, because they know him to have the words of eternal life.” (p. 131.)

Here we perceive the blindness of prejudice. The former of these accounts, so far as it is applicable to the subject, may just as properly be applied to his own, as to the Protestant view of the discourse; and in the same way, the latter of them may just as properly be applied to the Protestant, as to his own view of the discourse. The Jews were quite as far from the right meaning according to Dr Wiseman's plan, as according to the Protestant plan: a few words might as easily have relieved their minds in the one case as in the other: and Dr Wiseman's high opinion of the virtues of the audience warrants the expectation of a degree of information to be communicated, which does not seem called for by



that less favourable—and, I will venture to say, that much more scriptural—opinion, of the people of Capernaum, entertained by Protestants.

Dr Wiseman has the art, as the reader must often have observed, of giving ingenious turns to things. In the course of his first four lectures, he took such opportunities as he thought fit, to contrast the accordance of sentiment, respecting the interpretation of John vi, among the members of his own communion, with the diversity of opinion among Protestants, on the same subject. The correctness of that statement I all along ventured to deny; from a feeling that *he* knew the notion to be untrue, and that *I* knew it to be mischievous. Whether the learned author thinks the memory of Protestants as bad as their principles, I cannot say; but when once fairly clear of his dissertation on John vi, and engaged in discussing the words of Institution he certainly has a new tale to tell. Not that he makes his transition abruptly. He does not so much wish to change the air, as to modulate into another key. However strenuous for the doctrine of Transubstantiation, the Church of Rome, we are assured, had too much consideration for its members, to bind them down to *one* interpretation of John vi: that, namely, in proof of the Real Presence. So writes the learned author, in the following passage:

“But regarding the promise in St John, the holy Synod [the Council of Trent] observed its usual caution, which proves how far it was from merely seeking to impose doc-

trines, without sufficient proof to satisfy the conditions of our principle of faith. For the functions of a general Council being to define what the Church had always taught, as such unanimity among the ancient Fathers and among later divines was not discovered as could meet the intensity of proof required, it manifestly drew a distinction between the two passages, and did not sanction the words of promise with a formal dogmatical precision." (p. 157.)

And after dressing up a few historical notices, so as to give countenance to such representations, he draws the following conclusions:

"This controversy is important in many respects: 1. Inasmuch as it proves how false are the assertions commonly made, that the Council blindly decreed whatever it listed, without any consideration of grounds or arguments; since so far from wishing, at any cost, to seize upon a strong confirmatory proof such as it might have drawn from John vi, it prudently refrained from defining any thing regarding it, because the tradition of the Church, however favourable, was not decided for it, as for the other argument. 2. Although when arguing with Protestants, we waive the authority of the Council, and argue upon mere hermeneutical grounds, and can support one proof on these as strongly as the other, yet to the mind of the Catholic who receives his faith from the teaching of the Church, the evidence of the dogma is in the argument on which we are now entering, and which has been pronounced by her definitive on the subject." (p. 160.)

My conjecture is, that the learned author has read the history of the Council of Trent with hermeneutical spectacles. No other supposition appears to account so easily for the sentiments and inferences presented by the foregoing paragraphs. Whoever can come from the perusal of that history, by whomsoever written, with such impressions, is fully prepared to believe any doctrine, and maintain

any opinion. With regard to the Council of Trent, the following are, as briefly as I can give them, the facts of the case.

Some progress towards the doctrine of Transubstantiation was made at the second Council of Nice, in 787; but it was not formally established, as a tenet of the Church, till the fourth Lateran Council of 1215. That doctrine—by involving the notion, that the bread apart from the wine, as well as the wine apart from the bread, was converted into our Lord Jesus Christ, in his complete divine and human nature—easily led to the communion in one kind only, as perfect in itself. Practical inconveniences were assigned as the reason for the innovation in the mode of administering the Eucharist; but the real object seems to have been to wrap the character of the sacrament in additional mystery, and to invest the priesthood with new prerogatives. Moreover, if one part of the sacrament were withheld from the laity, we can easily understand why it should be the cup. Great as was the authority of the Church in those days, and vague as was the knowledge of Scripture and early usages, yet did not the custom of communion in one kind gain ground, without exciting strong feelings of discontent among the people. In this state of things, an attempt was made (1414), to put an end to all uncertainty on the subject, by the Council of Constance—a Council remarkable for many strange and not very creditable circumstances, and of dreadful notoriety on account



of its proceedings with regard to Jerome of Prague. This Council taught the world what ought to be thought of the question at issue, by virtue of the following notable Decree: that "although Christ had instituted the sacrament in both kinds, and the Primitive Church had retained the same method of administering it, YET THESE THINGS NOTWITHSTANDING, the custom of the Church, of administering to the laity in the form of bread only, was to be observed\*." This was a bold plan of meeting the difficulty; but not being well-timed, failed in effecting what was intended. In short, the Council of Constance, in this manner told the truth, respecting the origin of the new mode of communicating, to numbers who had previously been able only to guess at it; and many of the consequences of the measure were such as might have been foreseen. An avowed attempt, like that of the Council, to establish a Decree, in opposition to the authority of our Lord himself and the practice of the earliest ages, served but to stimulate the desire of correcting what was manifestly wrong, and almost gloried in as a becoming exercise of Ecclesiastical power. The decision, however, of the Council of Constance was confirmed by a Decree, bearing date 1437, of the Council of Basil: "that the Eucharist is to be received by the laity under one form; that Christ

\* "Licet Christus sub utrâque specie instituerit, eundemque administrandi modum Ecclesia Primitiva retinuerit, HIS TAMEN NON OBSTANTIBUS, consuetudo Ecclesiæ, quâ sub panis specie tantummodo a laicis suscipiatur, est observanda." Sess. 13.



exists entire under each form ; and that the custom of the Church is to be held as a law\*.” All this was still of no avail. The opinions of men had taken a decided course, and they moved onwards. Extreme dissatisfaction, indeed, had spread far and wide, and loud were the complaints proceeding from all quarters, when the Council of Trent was convened ; and during the protracted existence of the Council, from 1545 to 1563, there was perhaps no question approached with greater solicitude, or debated with greater zeal, than that of giving or withholding the cup from the laity. Such had been the operation of the grievance felt by the people in this matter, that scarcely any thing threatened greater danger ; the apparent danger arising, not only from the declared reformers, but from those also who were anxious not to be driven into a coalition with men of violent measures. The King of France was displeased with the communion in one kind ; the Emperor still more so ; and the Duke of Bavaria declared that by nothing, but concession on that point, could his subjects be kept quiet. After much reluctance, on the part of the Council, to interfere in the matter, and various postponements of the enquiry—a discussion of the subject, and others closely connected with it, began, and lasted for several days. On the one hand, the advocates for

\* “Eucharistiam sub unâ specie a laicis suscipiendam ; Christum integrum esse sub alteruterâ specie ; et consuetudinem Ecclesiæ pro lege habendam.” Sess. 30.

communion in both kinds represented, as politicians, the murmurs of the people, and the disastrous consequences which might be expected unless that point were conceded—and, as divines, adduced arguments from the Institution; from primitive practice; *and from the 6th chapter of St. John*; in favour of their own views. On the other hand, the advocates for communion in one kind dwelt upon the immunity from error in the decisions of Councils; appealed to the Decrees of the Councils of Constance and Basil; and contended, that, in accordance with Augustine and other great fathers, *the 6th chapter of St. John was to be interpreted spiritually*. The situation of the Legates, upon whom devolved the duty of drawing up the final decrees, was, in this manner, truly embarrassing; and great must have been their perplexity. They were, however, men of the world—not easily thrown off their guard; and amidst so many conflicting sentiments, appear to have resolved upon trying the effect of a cautious application of the grand principle of compromise. When therefore they had concocted their declarations and their canons, the result was as follows:

The Council so far stood by the Decrees of the Councils of Constance and Basil and their supporters, as to anathematize “any man who should say that all and singular of the faithful are obliged by Divine Precept, or as necessary to salvation, to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist in both kinds.”

The Council so far stood by the advocates for the communion in both kinds, as to declare that—“As to the Two Articles which were formerly proposed, and which still remain to be examined, namely, Whether the reasons which induced the Church to give the Eucharist to the laity, and to the non-celebrating clergy, under the species of bread alone, ought still to be so adhered to, as that the use of the cup ought to be allowed to no man whatsoever: and supposing that it should be thought convenient upon reasonable causes, and such as are founded upon Christian charity, to grant the use of the cup to some particular nation or kingdom, Whether the concession should be made with any conditions, and what those conditions ought to be?—The holy Council reserves the examination and determination of these Articles to another time—to wit, to the first occasion that shall be presented.” In the subsequent session of the Council, the whole matter, *integrum negotium*, was referred to the Pope, as alone able to settle the dispute.

The Council so far stood by the divines, who supported opposite interpretations of the 6th chapter of St John, that, like the umpire in ancient pastorals, it deemed the speakers on each side “equal in argument and prepared to answer;” declared that neither interpretation was adverse to the doctrine of communion in one kind; and far from giving the preference to either, sagely decided that there would be no small detriment to the heretics,



and at the same time, special advantage to the Church, in retaining them both\*.

The decisions of the Council were of course prepared by certain leading men; and every one must be struck with admiration of the adroitness with which those great masters of political tactics contrived to extricate themselves from the difficulties by which they were encompassed. Nothing, however, but an imagination like that which—with the assistance of hermeneutical principles, such as we have already described—metamorphosed the peo-

\* The canon respecting communion in both kinds was thus expressed: "Si quis dixerit, ex Dei præcepto, vel necessitate salutis, omnes et singulos Christi fideles utramque speciem sanctissimi Eucharistiæ Sacramenti sumere debere: anathema esto."

The declaration to the advocates of communion in both kinds was in these terms: "Duos verò articulos aliàs propositos, nondum tamen discussos, videlicet: An rationes, quibus sancta Catholica Ecclesia adducta fuit, ut communicaret laicos, atque etiam non-celebrantes sacerdotes, sub unâ tantum specie, ita sint retinendæ, ut nullâ ratione Calicis usus cuiquam sit permittendus: et, An, si honestis et Christianæ charitati consentaneis rationibus concedendus alicui, vel nationi vel regno, Calicis usus videatur, sub aliquibus rationibus concedendus sit; et quænam sint illæ: Eadem sancta Synodus in aliud tempus, oblatâ sibi quam primum occasione, examinandos atque definiendos reservat." The matter was afterwards referred to the Pope in similar terms.

The conclusion, respecting the 6th chapter of St John, appeared in these words: "Sed neque ex sermone illo, apud Joannem sexto, rectè colligitur, utriusque speciei communionem a Domino præceptam esse, utcunque juxta varias sanctorum patrum et doctorum interpretationes intelligatur." As to the retaining of both interpretations, "the following adjudication" (to adopt Dr Wiseman's language) "was given:" "Cum eâ geminæ interpretationis opulentia de S. Joannis testimonio Ecclesia frueretur, quarum utraque probationem ab hæreticis inde deductam impugnabat, ad unius tantummodo paupertatem non esse redigendam." These things occurred in the twenty-first session of the Council.



ple of Capernaum, in the manner we have seen—appears equal to the task of proving, from the conduct of “the holy Synod” in this matter, “how far it was from merely seeking to impose doctrines, without sufficient proof to satisfy the conditions” of the principle of faith, for which Dr Wiseman contends. There is indeed a sense—but not a sense exactly falling in with the learned author’s views—in which the Council did not, by any means, “blindly decree whatever it listed, without any consideration of grounds or arguments.” Grounds and arguments in abundance were presented for consideration; but the reader shall judge for himself of the extent to which they can be supposed to have led to a decision, on reasons drawn from Scripture and antiquity. Unless I greatly mistake, the most effective arguments of all were those advanced on the part of the Masters of many Legions.

The proceedings of the Council of Trent, in this matter, enable us to infer, that the countenance given by the Church of Rome, to Dr Wiseman’s interpretation of the 6th chapter of St John, is of a very ambiguous kind; although the learned author, in his four lectures on the subject, has left sufficient indications of a wish that the reader should form a different opinion. Taking into account the exemplary caution of the Council of Trent, I cannot but think that he would have acted more wisely, by engaging in this part of the controversy with less zeal. In the remaining lectures, he is fully entitled,

as a Roman Catholic, to lean upon the decisions of the Church to which he belongs. So far, however, as I can understand his language, in the closing sentence of the paragraph last quoted (p. 243)—the learned lecturer deems himself able, on hermeneutical principles, to support the proof from the words of Institution, as strongly as he has, by the same means, already supported the proof from John vi; so that, waiving the authority of the Council of Trent, he likewise engages to establish his next position on the sole ground of Scripture. To the arguments therefore, employed for that purpose, I have now to request the reader's attention.

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## **PART THE SECOND.**

**EXAMINATION OF THE WORDS BY WHICH  
THE EUCHARIST WAS INSTITUTED.**



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FROM: [illegible]  
TO: [illegible]  
SUBJECT: [illegible]

For facility of reference, I here present the different passages, from the New Testament, in which an account is given of the Institution of the Eucharist.

MATTHEW xxvi. 26—28.

26 Ἐσθιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν, λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν ἄρτον, καὶ εὐλογήσας, ἔκλασε καὶ ἐδίδου τοῖς μαθηταῖς, καὶ εἶπε, Λάβετε, φάγετε· τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου.

27 Καὶ λαβὼν τὸ ποτήριον, καὶ εὐχαριστήσας, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, λέγων, Πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες·

28 Τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης, τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of *it*;

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

MARK xiv. 22—24.

22 Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν, λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἄρτον, εὐλογήσας ἔκλασε, καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπε, Λάβετε, φάγετε· τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου.

23 Καὶ λαβὼν τὸ ποτήριον, εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς· καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες·

24 Καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης, τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον.

22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of *it*.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

## LUKE xxii. 19, 20.

19 Καὶ λαβὼν ἄρτον, εὐχα-  
ριστήσας ἔκλασε, καὶ ἔδωκεν  
αὐτοῖς, λέγων, Τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ  
σῶμά μου, τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδο-  
μενον· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν  
ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.

20 Ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον  
μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι, λέγων, Τοῦτο  
τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν  
τῷ αἵματί μου, τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν  
ἐκχυνόμενον.

19 And he took bread, and gave  
thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto  
them, saying, This is my body which  
is given for you: this do in remem-  
brance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after sup-  
per, saying, This cup is the new tes-  
tament in my blood, which is shed for  
you.

## 1 COR. xi. 23—25.

23 Ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ  
τοῦ Κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν,  
ὅτι ὁ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ  
ἣ παρεδίδοτο, ἔλαβεν ἄρτον,

24 Καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασε,  
καὶ εἶπε, Λάβετε, φάγετε, τοῦτό  
μου ἐστὶ τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν  
κλώμενον· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν  
ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.

25 Ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον,  
μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι, λέγων, Τοῦ-  
το τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη  
ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι· τοῦτο  
ποιεῖτε, ὅσάκις ἂν πίνετε, εἰς τὴν  
ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.

23 For I have received of the Lord  
that which also I delivered unto you,  
That the Lord Jesus the *same* night  
in which he was betrayed took bread;

24 And when he had given thanks,  
he brake *it*, and said, Take, eat: this  
is my body, which is broken for you:  
this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also *he*  
*took* the cup, when he had supped,  
saying, This cup is the new testament  
in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye  
drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

Let me take this opportunity to state that my observations on the Lectures on John vi. having been extended beyond my original design, I shall endeavour proportionally to compress my account of the Lectures on the words of Institution.

## PART II. SECTION I.

THE MODE OF INTERPRETING THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:  
MAY THEY BE UNDERSTOOD FIGURATIVELY?

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DR WISEMAN, in his fifth lecture, fairly avows the feelings of triumph, with which he takes his stand upon the vantage-ground secured to him, as he conceives, by his disquisition on the sixth chapter of St John, and surveys the region which lies before him. If, indeed, he can look back with contentment, he certainly may be excused for looking forward with something like exultation. So far, he has been displaying his valour, rather than his discretion, in a cause which the more prudent of his own Communion had, on several accounts, not been forward to defend; but henceforth he is really fighting under the banners of the Church of Rome. Of this change of circumstances in his favour, the learned author, as I have already intimated, takes good care to inform us; by stating that, in establishing the exact meaning of the words of Institution, he has "a higher authority than any hermeneutical reasoning can supply—the positive decree of the Council of Trent, which expressly defined that they prove the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood in the adorable Sacrament." Dr Wiseman how-



ever, notwithstanding the decisions of that famous Synod, having ventured to rely upon “hermeneutical reasoning” on the subject—my concern is with that reasoning, and not with the authority of the Council of Trent.

Before I proceed to my present undertaking, it is right to state that, in the fifth lecture, as well as in the following ones, Dr Wiseman has engaged in long discussions, with various writers, on points which, if not irrelevant, are certainly of very little consequence, to the subjects under consideration. By leaving such discussions for the most part unnoticed, I shall be enabled to bring each of the matters, which will for the moment successively occupy attention, more distinctly into view—and yet point out all that is really important—with no small abatement in my demands upon the reader’s time. This, then, is my purpose—which I shall endeavour to carry into effect.

Setting aside some slight differences of expression, which need not now be particularized—in the short accounts, of the Institution of the Eucharist, prefixed to this section—the question may be reduced to this—When our Saviour (Matt. xxvi. 26) “took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, **THIS IS MY BODY**”—in what sense are we to understand the words, *this is my body*, to have been spoken? The Roman Catholic maintains that they are to be taken in the strictest literal sense which the words admit

of; insomuch that we are to conceive that what was previously *bread* instantly became, in actual substance, *the material body* of Christ. The Protestant holds that the words are to be taken figuratively; so that what was before simply *bread* became *the symbol* of the body of Christ. A similar difference of opinion exists between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, with regard to the other part of the sacrament, arising from the words—"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The argument in each case is much the same. I shall therefore, for the sake of clearness, treat principally of *the bread*; referring to *the cup*, as circumstances may require....The reader, then, will observe that the question, in fact, turns upon this point—namely, whether the verb substantive, *is*, in the expressions, *This is my body*, *This is my blood*, compels us to suppose a change of the very substance of the bread and the wine, respectively, into the very substance of the body, and the blood, of Christ—or leaves us at liberty to believe that the bread and the wine become, respectively, the symbols of the body, and the blood, of Christ.

The plan of discussion, laid down or acceded to by Dr Wiseman, is this: first, to consider whether the words *may* be taken figuratively—and secondly, whether they *must* be so taken.

One mode of argument, in favour of a figurative interpretation, has been, to produce texts bearing some resemblance to the words in question; texts in which, as all are agreed, the literal expression is but the means of conveying a figurative meaning. The occurrence of texts of such a kind affords good evidence of the character of Scripture language; and in that way tends to confirm the opinion that the figurative interpretation in debate *may* be the true one. Dr Wiseman has examined, by the light of hermeneutical principles, some texts which had been alleged with the design just mentioned; dividing them, for that purpose, into four classes, as follows:

## CLASS I.

Gen. xli. 26. The seven good kine are seven years.

Dan. vii. 24. The ten horns are ten kings.

Matt. xiii. 38. The field is the world.

1 Cor. x. 4. And that rock was Christ.

Gal. iv. 24. For these are the two covenants.

Apoc. i. 20. The seven stars are the angels, &c.

## CLASS II.

John x. 7. I am the door.

— xv. 1. I am the true vine.

## CLASS III.

Gen. xvii. 10. This is my covenant between me and you.

## CLASS IV.

Exod. xii. 11. It is the Lord's Passover.

Now if these expressions are, by common consent, to be understood figuratively, they certainly prove all that they can fairly be alleged for:—namely, that, in our Lord's address to his disciples,



*This is my body*, there is nothing, in the turn of phrase, to prevent its being understood figuratively; —in other words, they prove, not that—*This is my body*—*must*, but that it *may*, be taken figuratively. Whether the address *must* be taken figuratively, will depend upon other considerations.

Although I shall have occasion to examine the preceding instances somewhat more particularly, I may here point out their general bearing upon the subject to be elucidated. To begin with the first. “The seven good kine are seven years.” Common sense teaches that “seven kine” cannot literally be “seven years.” The “kine” may be emblems, tokens, indications, &c. of the “years.” More than that it is impossible for them to be. The same may be said of the “ten horns” and the “ten kings.” On referring to Scripture, we find, as we might expect, that, by such affirmative language, the “kine” of Pharaoh’s dream and the “horns” of Daniel’s vision are made respectively to *represent* “years” and “kings.” Again, “That rock was Christ.” Even without the authority of Scripture, we should feel that this cannot be literally true; but Scripture informs us that the expression is figurative, and gives us the spiritual meaning. Moreover, as soon as we learn that it is our Lord, who says, “I am the door”—“I am the true vine”—we must have relinquished all claim to that power of understanding, without which the pages of Scripture will be laid before us in vain,



if we perceive not the figurative import of the phrases. With regard to the proposition, "These are the two covenants"—we know not, till we have ascertained to what the word "these" refers, whether a literal or a spiritual interpretation is required. When we find that the word "these" refers to the bond-woman and the free-woman, in the case of Abraham, we are aware that "these" cannot literally BE the two covenants; and accordingly, St Paul considers them as *representing* the two covenants, in the way of allegory. If we now take the affirmation, "This is my covenant between me and you," and compare it with the one just reviewed, we should, in my opinion, do very absurdly if we were to infer, from the similarity between the two, that, as the one is to be interpreted figuratively, so must the other. We must examine what the word "this" refers to; and supposing a natural incongruity, in the case, to preclude a literal explanation, we have not only that sort of warrant for adopting a figurative meaning, but that sanction which is derived from Scripture in the other instance. In the same manner must the import of the word "this," in "This is my covenant," be ascertained, and the passage interpreted.....With these examples before us, let us now advert to the words of our Lord, when instituting the Eucharist. He "took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, *Take, eat, This is my body.*" We do not say that the words, "This

is my body," are to be interpreted figuratively, because similar expressions in other parts of Holy Writ are so interpreted; but we do say, that the word "this" indisputably refers to the "bread" which was broken—which bread can no more be literally our Lord's body, than the seven good kine can be seven years, or the rock can literally be Christ; and we also affirm that the numerous instances, in Scripture, of such figurative interpretation, do not only indicate that the words of institution *may* be understood figuratively, but seem strongly to authorize their being so understood.

For the more easy management of the passages which have now been discussed, Dr Wiseman supposes them to have been adduced solely because they are *parallel passages*; and having shown, by absolute quotations, from most learned and most hermeneutical writers, that the said passages are by no means parallel, according to the definitions of parallelism—he straightway concludes that they can have no weight in the scale, against the Roman Catholic interpretation of our Lord's words. In no other part of the work is there a more obvious attempt to involve a plain matter in perplexity. While intent upon examining the force of the instances alleged, we are called off to determine the accuracy of the name, by which they have been collectively designated. So far as I can perceive, Hermeneutics may be described as that science in which sophistry is reduced to system; the main use

thereof being to afford aid in the substitution of artifice instead of thought.

And here, a few remarks may perhaps be warranted, with regard to this recurrence of the learned author to hermeneutical principles; more especially as he goes on to contrast his own exact mode of investigation (by virtue of truly parallel passages) in the case of John vi, with the irregular proceedings of the Protestants, in adducing the illustrative instances lately laid before the reader. Of the success of that mode of investigation (however parallel the passages might be) the first part of this volume has furnished the means of judging. As, however, the result was so satisfactory, why was not a similar plan adopted, with respect to the words of Institution? Without being very anxious about phrases from the Talmud and the Rabbins—from the Arabic and Syriac and Greek and Latin—we might have expected in this case some “parallel passages,” from the New Testament at least, in confirmation of his own literal interpretation of the words *This is my body*:—not irregular illustrations, after the manner of the Protestant texts—but real parallel passages—to be discoursed of, on sound hermeneutical principles. The absence of such proofs is the more remarkable, in consequence of the magnificent language employed (if I understand it rightly) as an indication of what might easily be done in that way. Such I take to be the purport of the following paragraph:



“The question in dispute is whether *is* in our case is to be taken figuratively, or may be taken figuratively, in the words of Institution; and our adversaries bring a number of passages where it is so taken. But on the other hand, I can bring them some thousands of passages where the verb ‘to be’ is taken literally. If, therefore, they choose to take those passages as parallel, and reject mine, they must show some peculiarity in the words in question, which detaches them from the great mass of passages, where ‘to be’ occurs, and associates them with the few, where it bears a certain peculiar sense. Yet this they have never attempted to do.” (p. 170.)

Notwithstanding Dr Wiseman’s doubts on the matter, I cannot persuade myself that he was not pretty well aware of the peculiarities which led to the selection of the instances in question, with the design of illustrating the words of Institution. It is, at least, quite certain that he has taken some pains to avert the natural consequences of those peculiarities, with regard to his own views....I suppose him to assert, a little before—that, in proof of a literal interpretation of the words, he could bring some thousands of passages, quite as valid as those of the Protestants in favour of a figurative interpretation. Now, not being so literal an interpreter as Dr Wiseman is, I am enabled to make no small concessions. In matters of this kind therefore, where the learned author writes *thousands*, I am ready to understand *scores*; a considerable reduction truly—but by no means out of the way, in the case of a person endowed with Dr Wiseman’s prodigious powers of amplification. Amidst the *scores*, then—for we have done with the *thousands*—of



passages to the purpose—was he made poor by his very abundance—was he absolutely bewildered by variety? Half a score instances, to match the same number on the Protestant side, would have been, whether classed or not classed, not only an ornament to his volume, but a better voucher for his opinions, than the whole science of hermeneutics, applied to the subject with a dexterity, which (if such a thing be possible) is to that of Dr Wiseman, as ten to one. Not a single instance has been produced. In fact, a single instance, as much in point as several of those objected to, would have achieved more, for the doctrine of Transubstantiation, than has been effected by argument, during the six hundred and twenty-one years, interposed between the sanction of that doctrine by the fourth Lateran Council, and the publication of the lectures on the Eucharist.

The learned author being unable, as I conclude, to produce a passage of the slightest importance to his own cause, employs his ingenuity upon the passages cited by Protestants; and his first method of disposing of them will be understood from the following observations:

“If I desire to illustrate the phrase (Gen xli. 26), ‘the seven good kine are seven years,’ by Matt. xiii. 38, ‘the field is the world,’ or both by Gal. iv. 24, ‘For these are the two covenants,’ I am fully justified in doing so, and in considering the passages as perfectly parallel; because the context demonstrates to me that the same *thing* exists in all; namely, the *explanation of a symbolical instruction*, in one instance a vision, in another a parable, in the third an allegory. But then

it follows, likewise, that in order to thrust the words 'this is my body' into the same category, and treat them as parallel, we must show *them* also to contain the same *thing* (which every single instance in the first class of texts does show)—the explanation of a symbolical instruction. Till this be done, there is no parallelism established." (p. 174.)

In plain English—first prove your point—and then have recourse to your arguments:—first show that the words of Institution *are* to be understood figuratively—and then give your instances, as indications that they *may* be so understood. Can any thing be more preposterous? If the words have been proved to be "in the same category" by other means, why flourish away with instances? The very object of the proceeding is to evince—by means of instances, under a certain similarity of circumstances—that the words *may* be "in the same category"—*may* have a symbolical import.... Whether the perplexity of thought in the preceding paragraph is voluntary, or involuntary, I know not. It would be thought strange in most writers; but, for some reason, it does not appear extraordinary in Dr Wiseman.

In what "category" the next argument is to be placed, shall be left to others to decide. Fain would I hope that it is unique, even in the writings of this learned theologian. I might give it in fewer words; but, that there may be no erroneous impression, I shall merely transcribe what I find:

"This argument receives still greater strength, from observing that in no one of the instances heaped together by our

opponents, are we left to conjecture that an explanation of symbols is meant to be conveyed, but the context in each expressly informs us of the circumstance. This is evident of the examples from Joseph, Daniel, and our Saviour ; for they are clearly said to be giving or receiving interpretations. St Paul to the Galatians is equally careful to let us see the same ; for this is his entire sentence : ‘ Which things are an *allegory* ; for these *are* the two covenants.’ After the expression, ‘ the rock *was* Christ,’ he is careful to add (v. 6.) ‘ now these things were done *in figure of us* ;’ and in the very sentence he tells us that it was a *spiritual* rock whereof he spoke....And with passages so explained by the very writers, it is pretended to compare the simple narrative, ‘ Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to his disciples, and said, Take ye and eat : *this is my body.*’ ” (pp. 175, 176.)

The objection here is, that reference is made to passages, which are proved, by their contexts, to require a figurative interpretation. And of what use would have been the reference, unless the contexts *had* manifested the true import of the passages ? What would Dr Wiseman have said, if passages had been quoted, of which it was uncertain whether the meaning was literal or figurative ? He would assuredly have expatiated—and very properly—on the folly of the proceeding ; and have suggested reasons, by no means wanting in subtilty, in favour of interpretations according with his own views. I feel most sensibly the irksomeness of having to expose such miserable sophistry, as that which it is now my misfortune to encounter ; but my duty demands such exposure, and my duty I will perform. I am, moreover, haunted by the sad reflection, that a man of learning and talent should have thus



“fallen from his high estate”—and have stooped to perversions of the intellectual powers, from which, as I should have hoped, the meanest and most illiterate of his brethren, who had the sense to discern what they were doing, would have had the virtue to shrink with disdain.

Dr Wiseman goes on, to retort the arguments of Protestants against themselves, in the person of a Socinian. It will, as usual, be the best plan to let him speak in his own language:

“In the very beginning of his Gospel, St John says, “The word *was* God.” This has always been considered, by Protestants as well as Catholics, a strong argument for the divinity of Christ. Now the entire force of the argument rests upon the little word *was*. So important is this syllable, that, to evade its force, Photinus thought it necessary to separate it from the following word, and read, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν. Ὁ λόγος οὗτος, &c.; Crellius, on the contrary, wished to read Θεοῦ the *Word* was of God. But how useless is all this torture inflicted upon the text, after the simple process of reasoning which Protestants have employed against us, with such satisfaction to themselves.” (p. 176.)

The Evangelist having been directed, by the Holy Spirit, to discourse of what was IN THE BEGINNING—and of THE WORD—and of GOD—subjects which no finite unassisted intelligence can attain unto—every serious mind must be impressed with the conviction, that it is our duty to study the information communicated to us with all humility—not as judges of the subjects, but as learners. Can any thing, then, be conceived more unbecoming a human being, than the determination to interpret



the declaration—*The Word was God*—in conformity with his own notions of THE WORD and of THE DIVINE EXISTENCE? And what warrant does the figurative interpretation of the words, *This is my body*, afford, for such a proceeding? The ground for a figurative interpretation in this instance is, that the literal meaning manifestly implies that which cannot be; but no man is competent to say that in the instance of, *The Word was God*, the literal meaning implies that which cannot be. Hence, “the simple process of reasoning which Protestants have employed” is excluded from all concern with the latter expression, by the very circumstances of the case.... This is one of Dr Wiseman’s best arguments; although I think he must have been well aware of its fallacy. But be that as it may, he has thought fit to place the argument in another light. Mr Faber, in his ‘Difficulties of Romanism,’ appears to have written as follows: “Christ does not more explicitly say of the bread and wine ‘this is my body’ and ‘this is my blood,’ than St Paul says of the rock whereof the Israelites drank in the wilderness, ‘and the rock was Christ\*.’” On this passage Dr Wiseman makes the following remarks:

“Well now, let us take this very text and compare it with the words of Institution, on one side, and with the first verse

\* I take the passage, as Dr Wiseman has given it, from the first edition (1826) of Mr Faber’s work, p. 58. On looking over the second edition—not *very* carefully—I did not meet with the passage; but it may nevertheless be there. I am unable to refer to the first edition.

of St John, and see which it most resembles, to which it is more parallel. I write it thus between them:—

‘The Word *was* God.’

‘The rock *was* Christ.’

‘This *is* my body.’

Now tell me which have we most right to consider parallel, The construction of the two first is, word for word, identical; certainly much more so than that of the two last; and if parallelism have to depend only upon similarity of phrase, and if Protestants have a right to interpret the words ‘this is my body’ by the help of ‘the rock was Christ,’ then I say the Socinian has an equal right to interpret the phrase ‘the Word was God,’ by the very same parallelism, and explain it by ‘the Word *represented* God.’” (p. 177.)

To these remarks, several things may be offered in reply. 1. I do not suppose that Mr Faber adduced the two passages as *parallel*, according to the meaning which Dr Wiseman would attach to that word: so that, with respect to Mr Faber, the remarks do not seem very appropriate. 2. To infer, from their similarity of form, that the expressions, “The Word was God” and “The rock was Christ,” are to be interpreted in the same manner—that is, both literally or both figuratively—accords rather with the mechanical system of the hermeneutical doctors, than that adherence to good common sense which Protestants contend for, in the explanation of Scripture language. 3. There is, in the words, “This [bread] is my body,” as well as “The rock was Christ,” when literally taken, a contradiction, which drives us to a figurative interpretation:—no man, as I have already intimated, can say that there is any contradiction in the literal meaning of—“The

Word was God.” Very far, therefore, are we from being placed in the predicament afterwards mentioned by Dr Wiseman:—that, “whatever we deny to the Socinian, is granted to himself—and whatever we take from him, we give in argument to the Socinian.” We can, with perfect consistency, deny the propriety of the Socinian’s reasoning from “The rock was Christ” to “The Word was God;” and, at the same time, object to the Roman Catholic’s reasoning from “The word was God” to “This is my body.” The truth is visible, in spite of all the haze with which it has been overspread by Dr Wiseman.

Having had my attention thus directed to the introductory verses of St John’s Gospel, I venture to offer a few considerations suggested by them; which, I think, are not without importance in the present enquiry....“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” We afterwards (v. 14) read on this wise: “And the Word was made flesh (καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο).” “Now tell me,” to use Dr Wiseman’s phrase, whether this assertion is to be understood literally. You say, Yes. But is it to be understood in the very strictest literal sense; insomuch that what before was THE WORD became *flesh*—we will say, became *man*, and *nothing more than man*? You hesitate: and why? Because this supposed conversion of the divinity, into a corruptible body, is incredible; and because—by interpreting



the phrase, not according to a system of philosophy and of grammar too rigid for any language to endure, but on the supposition that it was designed for ordinary understandings—we deduce a meaning consonant with other passages of Scripture. “We must not,” observes Bishop Pearson, “so far stand upon the propriety of speech, when it is written, ‘The Word was made flesh,’ as to destroy the propriety, both of the *Word* and of the *flesh*\*.” This transubstantiation of the divine nature into the human nature seems to have been held in ancient as well as in modern times. The Athanasian Creed is good evidence for the opinions on such subjects in the earlier ages; and we there—along with the declaration, that our Lord is “one Christ”—find the following expressions: “One: *not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh*; but by taking of the manhood into God:”—which are directly opposed to the doctrine above described. In the seventeenth century, this tenet, of the conversion of the divine into the human nature, greatly prevailed among the Flandrian Anabaptists. As an inference from the whole, I am inclined to ask, What should we think, of any one in these days, who, on the plea of literal interpretation, should so understand the Incarnation of

\* Pearson, on the Creed, Art. 3. He mentions the Flandrian Anabaptists; and in the note, discusses the endeavours of the Socinians, on the one hand, to prove that *ἐγένετο* can have no other meaning than *fuit*; and the determination of those Anabaptists, on the other, to stretch it to the highest sense of *factum est*. Here indeed, as every where, he writes well.



THE WORD? Yet how much stronger the affirmation, *The word was made flesh* (ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο), than the expression *This is my body* (τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου). On the strength, however, of this latter text—with as little supplementary evidence as can possibly be imagined—the doctrine of the transubstantiation of bread into flesh—so repugnant to our perceptions and our reason—is made to depend. Here assuredly is a case in which we feel under the strongest obligations to adopt, with the requisite alterations, the language of Bishop Pearson: “We must not so far stand upon the propriety of speech, when it is written, ‘This is my body,’ as to destroy the propriety both of the *bread* and of the *body*.”

The first chapter of St John’s Gospel—now before me—suggests another proof of the necessity of duly considering the circumstances of the case, before we explain the phraseology of Scripture in its most rigorously literal sense...In Malachi iv. 5, we read—“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.” This declaration seems to have led to a strong persuasion, amongst the Jews, that Elijah, (or Elias), in person, was to precede the Messiah. Our Lord more than once alluded to the opinion. In Matt. xi. 13—15, he said: “All the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias (αὐτός ἐστιν Ἠλίας), which was to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him

hear:”—this last expression being probably an indication, that they were not prepared to understand the import of his words. On a subsequent occasion, when his disciples asked him, “Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?”—he answered (Matt. xvii. 12), “I say unto you that Elias is come already (Ἡλίας ἦδη ἦλθε), and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed.” The Evangelist goes on to say, “Then the disciples understood, that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.” From all these considerations, we know that John the Baptist was the Elias who was to come. Now, in John i. 19—21, “when the Jews sent Priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?”—on their enquiring, “Art thou Elias,” he said, “I am not.” The apparent discrepancy is at once removed, by the words of the Angel who appeared to Zacharias, announcing the destination and character of the son who would be born unto him (Luke i. 17): “He shall go before him [the Lord] in the spirit and power of Elias.” On the one hand, therefore, we must conclude that, when our Lord affirmed of John the Baptist, “This is Elias (αὐτός ἐστιν Ἡλίας),” the expression must be taken with some abatement as to the strict literal meaning, and be understood to signify Elias, not in person, but “in spirit and power.” On the other hand, we must conceive the Jews to have asked John, and John to have understood them to ask, “Art thou Elias?” in its strictest literal sense;

in which case he answered correctly—and in accordance with what we have seen—"I am not."...So long as warrants like these exist in Scripture, for the figurative interpretation of passages appearing to convey a determinate literal meaning, there ought to be very strong reasons, indeed, quite independent of the expression itself, to induce us to give a literal import to the words "This is my body."

In what has hitherto been alleged, I fancied that the word "this," in "This is my body," was on all hands understood to imply, "this bread." On this view of the subject, however, the dispute appears to be at an end; for Dr Wiseman fairly acknowledges that "when there is a definite object which is said to be something else," the literal meaning cannot be maintained. "We know," he observes, "that two material objects cannot be identical; and therefore we are compelled to fly, by a positive repugnance and contradiction, to another sense\*." In illustration of his meaning, he explains "The rock was Christ," as signifying, "The rock was Christ-like." Without admiring the specific interpretation, I admit its principle; and supposing "this" to imply "this bread," I see not how, on the same ground, it is possible to avoid treating "This is my body" in a similar manner—and give the words a figurative meaning. The learned author—whom I am sure I would not misrepresent—appears to take the same view of the matter; and in consequence,

\* Lectures, p. 179.



betakes himself to a new mode of argument—which I present in his own language :

“It is obviously necessary to fly from the literal meaning of texts which represent two material objects as identical.... But we have no reason for this change, where one term is left vague and indefinite, and has no subjective existence till the other confers it. For Christ does not say ‘bread is my body,’ ‘wine is my blood;’ which, in point of construction, would have brought these words within a possibility of comparison with ‘the seven kine are seven years,’ or, ‘the horns are kings.’ But he says, ‘*this* is my body,’ ‘*this* is my blood.’ The *THIS* is nothing but the body and the blood; it represents nothing, it means nothing, till identified, at the close of the sentence, with the substances named.... This is even more marked in the original Greek than in our language; because the distinction of genders shows clearly that the bread is not indicated; but only a vague something, to be determined by the remainder of the sentence. In this manner, the motive or reason which in those texts drives us from the literal sense, as involving a contradiction, does not exist here, and consequently we cannot consider this as parallel with them.” (pp. 180, 181.)

The reader, I am persuaded, would not have believed that any author of the present day could possibly have had recourse to an argument like the preceding. It can only be by completely abstracting the words—“This is my body,” “This is my blood”—from the whole context—and considering them apart from every thing else—that Dr Wiseman’s generalized views of the matter can have the slightest pretension to even a moment’s thought. To show the fallacy of the argument at once :—The learned writer himself places our Lord’s addresses to his disciples, with regard to his body and his blood, under precisely the same predicament. He



affirms that "the THIS" in "This is my blood," as well as in "This is my body," "represents nothing till identified, at the close of the sentence, with the substances named." Now, what is the fact? St Luke and St Paul agree in stating that, when our Lord took the cup, he said, "This CUP is the new testament in my blood." So far is it from being true, that "the THIS" "represents nothing." Dr Wiseman, with all his zeal for literal interpretation, will not deny that *the cup* really means *the wine* contained in the cup; and, in another place, he has declared that "This cup is the new testament in my blood" is equivalent to "This is my blood\*." In this manner we arrive at the conclusion, that the expression, "This is my blood," is equivalent to the expression "This wine is my blood;" and we infer, by analogy, that "This is my body" is equivalent to "This bread is my body." Here, then, we have, in separate instances, "two material objects," which, as the learned writer justly remarks, "cannot be identical"—that is, bread cannot be the human body, and wine cannot be the human blood—so that, as he goes on to maintain, "we are compelled to fly, by a positive repugnance and contradiction, to another sense"—namely, a figurative sense, of the passages. And thus, on Dr Wiseman's own principles—which, in this case, are incontrovertible—the words of Institution are quite fatal to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The argu-

\* Lectures, p. 156.

ment, in fact, is at an end; and, in proceeding with this examination of the lectures on the Eucharist, my only object will be—as my main object has hitherto been—to show how little can be effected, by subtile reasonings on minute points, either in support of a bad cause, or in opposition to a good one.

The use of the word *cup* (τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον), instead of the contents of the cup, by St Luke and St Paul—and the omission of the word by St Matthew and St Mark, “this” being left to indicate the substantive to which it referred—afford sufficient proof that the passages in question were designed for the comprehension of plain men; and that they can never give out strange and portentous significations, unless tortured by the rules of sophistical dialecticians and relentless theologians. Independently of the foregoing observations, let the reader just look at one of the accounts of the Institution—that of St Matthew, for instance—“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body”—and then let him consider whether he can possibly imagine any one seriously maintaining that the word “this” had not a determinate reference to *the bread* which had been taken, and blessed, and broken and given to the disciples. The thing seems incredible. Much indeed may be allowed to a zealous controversialist, in defence of a favourite dogma; but concession scarcely

extends to a notion like that. Its appearance serves, as one instance among many, to show, in the words of Bishop Butler, "how much that religious and sacred attention, which is due to truth, is lost out of the world." What arguments would be avoided, if writers would but determine not to extract doctrines from Scripture, by means of positions which they cannot vindicate to their own conscience, in the most solemn moments of reflection.

Dr Wiseman mentions the circumstance of the demonstrative pronoun *this* (τοῦτο) being in the neuter gender, while *the bread* (ἄρτος) is in the masculine; not, I am willing to believe, as the main ground of his opinion—that "only a vague something" is indicated—but rather as additional evidence for its correctness. After the preceding observations, there can be no necessity to engage in this kind of verbal criticism. Indeed, I give the learned author credit for much greater information, on the subject, than would enable him to show the utter futility of the argument, if advanced against himself. A passage therefore already mentioned—Gal. iv. 24. "For these are the two covenants"—which he has next brought into comparison with the words of Institution, may now receive a slight notice. In this case, Dr Wiseman first proves, in his own way, that the word "these" refers to Sarah and Agar; and then reasons thus: The pronoun in Gal. iv. 24 represents two persons—but the pronoun in the words of Institution indicates "only



a vague something ;” therefore the former passage may be understood figuratively—the latter cannot... Instead of employing argument, I will state the real difference between the two cases. In Gal. iv. 24, some reflection is required, before the mind is satisfied, as to the particular persons or things designated by “these;” whereas, in the words of Institution, it is impossible to avoid seeing, at once, what is meant by “this.” Let the reader, who is sufficiently interested in the matter, compare the passages, and draw his own conclusion.

Dr Wiseman proceeds to our Lord’s expressions (John x. 7 ; xv. 1) respecting himself—“I am the door”—“I am the true vine;” and contends that, in these instances, “to be” does not mean “to represent”—“I represent the door”—“I am a figure of the true vine.” The interpretation given is, “I resemble the door”—“I am like the true vine.” Now, even admitting this explanation, the argument from the passages remains the same. The literal meaning is not the true one; and that is the only point of any consequence in the present enquiry. No man, I should suppose, maintains that, whenever figurative meanings are assigned, “to be” invariably signifies “to represent.” It is obvious to common sense, that the import of “to be” must depend upon the nature of the figure, in the particular circumstances of the case.

The passage of Scripture, next discussed by Dr Wiseman, is Gen. xvii. 10, “This is my covenant



between me and you;" for the due understanding of which, a little preliminary information will be requisite. In Gen. xii. 1, 2, we find that God had promised to Abraham, that he should become a great nation, and a blessing. God afterwards (v. 7) promised to his posterity the land of Canaan. In xiii. 14—17, the promise of the land, to him and his seed, is renewed; and in xv. 18, the land is given by covenant. In xvii, the promises are confirmed and the covenant is established. The following verses will render the point in question intelligible.

"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. 8. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. 9. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. 10. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you."

In what sense, then, are we to understand the words in v. 10, "This is my covenant?" Certain Protestant writers, it seems, suppose them to imply, "This (circumcision) is the sign, or token of my covenant;" partly because some modification of the meaning is deemed requisite—and partly because mention is made, in v. 11, of circumcision, as the

token of the covenant between God and Abraham. To this interpretation, Dr Wiseman objects; and, in my opinion, not without reason. He says, very justly, that the construction is—"This is my covenant &c."—namely, "Every man child among you shall be circumcised:" the direct reference, in the former part of the verse, being to the latter clause. Such construction occurs, not unfrequently, in the Old and New Testaments: for example, John vi. 29. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." On this plan, Dr Wiseman thus expresses the meaning of the verse: "the following is my covenant between thee and me, that every male child among you shall be circumcised\*." A few moments' reflection will show that this interpretation cannot be received without modification. If the interpretation be admitted, no distinction is made between the covenant, and the mode by which it is ratified. Suppose "the covenant" here to imply "the law, or condition, of the covenant, to be observed by Abraham and his descendants," and all becomes easy. "This is [the condition of] my covenant—[namely] every man child among you shall be circumcised:" and this being done, the circumcision (v. 11) "shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." Ainsworth and Patrick consider "the covenant," in v. 10, as *the sign* of the covenant; in which I think they are wrong. Daithe and Rosenmüller understand the

\* See Lectures, pp. 184—188.

term as there indicating *the law* of the covenant; and I agree with them\*. The conclusion seems to be, that the main purpose, for which the text can be adduced in the present enquiry, is to show by a remarkable instance that Scripture language is not in all cases to be explained according to the strictness of the letter.

The passage, Exod. xii. 11. "It is the Lord's passover"—with which Dr Wiseman takes leave of this part of the subject—is not sufficiently clear to afford illustration for other cases. The Israelites were commanded to eat the lamb, equipped for their journey, and in haste; the reason being—"It is the Lord's passover." According to the literal rendering of the Septuagint, the reason is—*πάσχα ἐστὶ Κυρίου*. Dr Wiseman's interpretation—"this is the paschal feast sacred to the Lord"—corresponds with the Septuagint, which seems to me to involve that very transition from a literal to a figurative meaning which he has all along been so strenuously opposing—namely, from the passover itself (by which I mean the events of that terrible night from which the commemorative rite derived its name) to the feast enjoined on the occasion. But enough on this point. After what I have already stated, the reader will not condemn me for not engaging in a formal discussion of the passage.

\* The version common to them both is as follows: "Lex verò hujus fœderis, quod tecum et cum posteris tuis pango, sit hæc: omnes mares inter vos debent circumcidi."

What I conceive to be the principal arguments, with regard to the doctrine of Transubstantiation, have been discussed in this section : enough, at least, has been stated, to warrant the production of Bellarmine's admission, respecting the nature of the Scriptural evidence for that doctrine. The opinion of that great champion of the Roman Catholic Church cannot but throw light as well upon our past course, as upon the remainder of our journey. Bellarmine then—in his “magnificent Controversies,” as Dr Wiseman calls them—after mentioning an observation which had been made, to the effect—that there is not a passage of Scripture sufficient to establish the doctrine of Transubstantiation, without the authority of the Church—acknowledges that this is not altogether improbable. For although the Scriptural proofs, which he had alleged, seemed to himself compulsory upon a person not very perverse, there was great reason to doubt whether it was so ; inasmuch as some of the most learned and acute men, Duns Scotus for instance, were of the contrary opinion. But there may be readers who would like to see Bellarmine's own account of the matter :

“Secundo dicit [Duns Scotus] non extare locum ullum Scripturæ tam expressum, ut sine Ecclesiæ declaratione evidenter cogat Transubstantiationem admittere. Atque id non est omnino improbabile. Nam etsi Scriptura, quam nos suprâ adduximus, videatur nobis tam clara, ut possit cogere hominem non protervum ; tamen an ita sit, meritò dubitari potest, cùm homines doctissimi et acutissimi, qualis imprimis Scotus fuit, contrarium sentiant.” (De Sacr. Euchar. l. iii. c. 23.)



Bellarmino subjoins another opinion of Scotus; which, if it had been adopted by his opponent Kemnitius and others, would, as he justly remarks, have put an end to all controversy. The opinion is, that as the Church had declared what was Scripture—from Scripture so declared, Transubstantiation could be clearly proved: that the true sense of Scripture must be that which is assigned by the author of Scripture: and that the same Holy Spirit, who dictated Scripture to the Apostles and Prophets, had by the Church declared what was Scripture. But His Eminence shall again be allowed to state the matter in his own language:

“Tertio addit, quia Ecclesia Catholica in generali Concilio Scripturam declaravit, ex Scripturâ sic declaratâ manifestè probari transubstantiationem. Non enim potest non esse verus Scripturæ sensus, quem is tradit, qui Scripturam condidit: idem autem Spiritus Sanctus est, qui et Scripturam dictavit Apostolis et Prophetis, et qui eam per Ecclesiam declaravit. Utinam modum istum loquendi Scoti, Kemnitius et cæteri Lutherani imitarentur; nulla enim controversia remaneret.”

All these things being duly weighed, I cannot but think that Bellarmine and others, had it not been for the authority of their Church, would probably have arrived at conclusions, respecting Transubstantiation as a doctrine of Scripture, very different from those of which they now appear as the defenders. If indeed I do not mistake, the present section affords some grounds for surmising what might have been the result of their enquiries on the subject. As a deduction from what has already been stated, let us place the two modes of interpret-

ing the words of Institution, so that they may be seen together.

According to the literal scheme, what *was* bread, and to all appearance *remained* bread, all at once became, and continued to be, the actual, material body of Christ. This follows from a verbal explanation so rigorous, as to be inapplicable to the general language of Scripture. The doctrine thus deduced cannot fairly be said to be warranted by the context. It requires the belief of that which every faculty, with which men have been endowed, pronounces not to be true—shocks moral feeling by the carnal materiality of the object presented to the thoughts—is utterly unlike everything else proposed in Holy Writ for human faith—and may lead (perhaps I ought to have written, has led) to many superstitious observances, and to still more fearful evils.

The figurative plan represents our Saviour as presenting to his disciples the tokens and memorials of himself, dying on the cross. This doctrine—founded on those principles of interpretation which are constantly and unconsciously applied to ordinary speech—and which our Lord's language especially requires—is supported by the context. It is in harmony with every part of the Christian faith—and in accordance with every moral feeling—falls in with the entire character of the Sacred Writings—and involves nothing but what is calculated to excite and sustain the purest feelings of piety.

Those persons totally mistake the matter, who fancy that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is but of minor importance—constituting an unessential difference of opinion, between people of different persuasions in religion. That doctrine is the central power which binds the Roman system together. It regulates every motion, and acts upon every particle. The very establishment, indeed, of such a tenet afforded full proof of Ecclesiastical authority already in existence, and was the great cause of its continuance. To comprehend the mode in which the doctrine produced its effects, we must combine, in our imaginations, the wondrous mystery which it professed to reveal—the more than human character with which it seemed to invest the priesthood—and the ignorance and superstition of the people. Even to the more intelligent, the very imperfection of its Scriptural evidence did but exalt that authority which boldly undertook to supply the place of Scripture. But as centuries rolled away, the case began to alter. More was thought of Scripture and less of supplemental authority; and the time has at length come, when the acknowledged defect of Scriptural Proofs, on this subject, is considered, by thinking men, as subversive of the claims of the Roman Catholic Church, to promulgate its own Decrees, as the Faith of the Gospel.

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## PART II. SECTION II.

THE MODE OF INTERPRETING THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:  
MUST THEY BE UNDERSTOOD FIGURATIVELY?

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DR WISEMAN resolves the question—"whether we *must* understand the words of Institution figuratively"—into the question—"whether we are compelled to prefer the figurative interpretation, in order to escape from greater difficulties, such as contradictions and violations of the law of nature." This, then, is the subject now to be discussed. But we shall do well first to understand the circumstances under which we are about to resume our enquiry. The learned author, we find, here supposes that the point at issue, so far as it depends upon the language of Scripture, has been settled in his own favour. His principles of interpretation he holds to have been undeniable—his mode of applying them accurate in the extreme—and consequently, his results beyond controversy. On the contrary, satisfied, as I am, that his whole plan of proceeding is objectionable in the highest degree, I can discover nothing, in his attempt to establish his literal meanings, but a failure as complete as can be imagined. Now, we know beforehand, that whatever difficulties, of the kind just alluded to,



may exist, they furnish so many reasons against a literal, and in favour of a figurative interpretation. So that, if hermeneutics have been treacherous allies in Dr Wiseman's cause, philosophy, as an enemy, will on that account be the more destructive. Meanwhile the Protestant has the consciousness of being powerfully supported, both by Scripture honestly explained, and by those external considerations which no one despises, till he feels them to be irreconcilably at variance with his own notions. On these grounds, I reject, with unspeakable scorn, the insinuations contained in the following extract, in which he wishes to persuade his readers that Protestants receive not the doctrine of Transubstantiation solely on account of the philosophical difficulties by which it is surrounded:

"Having proved that, in the language used by our Saviour, he can only have had one meaning... we cannot depart from that meaning, but can only choose between believing or disbelieving him. If you say, that what he asserts involves an impossibility, the only choice is, will you believe what he states, in spite of its teaching what *to you* seems such, or will you reject his word and authority for it? It cannot be, that he does not state it, when all the evidence which can possibly be required or desired proves that he did. In a word, Christ says, 'This is my body,' and every rule of sound interpretation tells you that he must have meant to say it simply and literally: your selection is between belief or disbelief that it is his body; but you are shut out from all attempts to prove that he could not mean to make that literal assertion." (p. 196.)

Duns Scotus—the great *doctor subtilis* of the 14th century—could not discover, as Dr Wiseman can, that the Real Presence in the Eucharist may

be deduced from Scripture. Bellarmine—the great controversialist of the 17th century—was aware, of what Dr Wiseman does not seem to be aware—that learned and able enquirers may have reason not to be convinced by the proofs usually alleged for the same doctrine. The Schoolman indeed and the Cardinal had really studied the subject; the one with a much more penetrating mind—the other with a much more solid erudition—and both of them with a far greater desire to ascertain the merits of the case—than can be traced in our modern lecturer. To say that those writers would not have adopted the sentiments which Dr Wiseman has not scrupled to use in the last paragraph, is to say but little. I cannot conceive such sentiments to be avowed by any man, who has ever thought seriously of the matter; who has thought, I mean, for the purpose of finding the truth, and not for the mere invention of arguments in defence of an opinion. Have we not been taught, by the learned author himself, that there are passages of Scripture, in which, when literally interpreted, two material objects appear to be identical—insomuch that “we are compelled to fly, by a positive repugnance and contradiction, to another”—a figurative—“sense?\*” What warrant has he for thinking that the words of Institution are not to be reckoned amongst those passages? Is it for *him* to descant upon what must result from “every rule of correct interpretation”—whose volume

\* Lectures, p. 179; also the present volume, p. 276.

abounds, almost beyond example, in false principles and erroneous applications—in misstatements and contradictions of all kinds? Is it for one who is scarcely ever right, even by accident, to decide that the literal meaning of certain texts is so indubitable, that to accept or refuse them, in that sense, is to choose between belief or disbelief in the Saviour of the world? I repel, as I have said, such language with indignation; and I affirm that, in adopting it, Dr Wiseman has arrogated to himself much more of the judicial authority, than would have been justified by a far more masterly performance.

The learned author enters upon the subject of his sixth lecture, by complaining of those Protestant writers who have commenced their disquisitions on Transubstantiation, by dwelling upon the fact that it is contradicted by our senses:—that which the Roman Catholic affirms to be the real, substantial body of Christ appearing to be bread—and that which he affirms to be the real, substantial blood of Christ appearing to be wine. I am no advocate for inverting the natural order of things. To ascertain the doctrines of Scripture we ought certainly to betake ourselves to the examination of Scripture; and yet be very careful not to leave behind us such portions of understanding and information as we happen to possess. The course of investigation however, which we are in the present instance pursuing, having been marked out by Dr Wiseman himself, the mistakes of others in this respect can-



not affect the enquiry now in progress; and therefore we may at once go on with the main subject.

The learned author affirms that, at the Institution of the Eucharist, a miracle was wrought: in other words, that the bread was substantially converted into the human body of our Lord Jesus Christ—and the wine substantially converted into his actual blood. On what evidence is this affirmed? Many wonderful works, performed by our Lord, are recorded in the Gospels—with the particularity with which eye-witnesses would naturally relate striking events. He first manifested his power by turning water into wine;—and the circumstances are related with great exactness, together with the admiration excited at the taste of “the good wine” in that manner produced. The conversion of bread into flesh, and of wine into blood, must be as astonishing an event, as the turning of water into wine: what account of the change do we find in the Gospels? No account whatever: not a trace of a miracle can be discovered. We read of bread and of wine: we read of words spoken: but the senses of those present, by which alone the bread and wine could be known to be really such *before* the words were spoken, attested the same truth *after* the words were spoken. A like difference exists, between every instance of a miracle related in the Gospels, and the case in question. The changes specified as miraculous invariably struck the senses: the supposed change in the Eucharist was in contradiction to the senses.



If, then, the alleged change of substance of the bread and wine be opposed by the testimony of the senses, we once more ask, On what evidence does the fact rest? Did our Lord distinctly state that, notwithstanding appearances, such a change had really taken place; and did the Apostles indicate that they understood him to have so stated, and that they believed him, notwithstanding appearances? Nothing of the kind. The evidence is derived from words which are not only susceptible of a more obvious and a more easy interpretation, than that which is produced as a voucher for the fancied change—but which have been understood, in that more easy and obvious sense, by men, to say the least, as wise, as learned, as upright and as pious, as the most eminent among the members of the Church of Rome. To declare what I conscientiously believe to be the truth, there is not, I am persuaded, any interpretation that ever was devised, of any other portion of the New Testament, at once so unfitted to the context, so opposed to the general tenor of Scripture, so inconsistent with the natural conceptions of the human mind, so fraught with evil consequences, as is the Roman Catholic explanation of the words of Institution.

Dr Wiseman—persevering in his unwarranted assumption, that the words of Institution were intended to be understood to imply a substantial change in the bread and wine, and that the Apostles did so understand them—goes on to consider the

kind of "estimate of our Lord's power which they must have formed by witnessing his actions\*." I once more protest against this assumption. The question is—not what were their impressions of his power—but whether that was an occasion on which they would conceive that his power was brought into exercise. The Apostles, as the learned author justly observes, were plain, uneducated, unsophisticated men—not philosophical reasoners. Our Lord had repeatedly worked miracles in their presence: he had in an instant cured diseases—removed deformity—restored withered limbs—raised the dead;—he had walked upon the waters—he had fed thousands by means of a few loaves and fishes. The Apostles therefore must have been fully convinced of the divine power of their Master, and competent judges of the truth of a sign or wonder of which they were witnesses. But were these persons likely to imagine a miracle to have been worked where no change was exhibited before them? Dr Wiseman concludes that, when our Lord, in presenting the bread, used the words, "This is my body," no idea of any impossibility in the case could have occurred to them. How should it? Changes they had witnessed—instantaneous, stupendous changes—and they must have dwelt much and often on the power which had effected them. But, in the Institution of the Eucharist, there was no appearance of change: there was nothing to suggest

\* Lectures, pp. 205—209.

the idea of power. The notion of a miracle—to them, at that time—must have been as remote as possible from their thoughts. A miracle attested by no change must not only have been contrary to all their experience, but to all their perceptions of the reasons for which miracles were wrought. To any one who will take time to reflect on the subject, the supposition of a miracle, under such circumstances, cannot but involve a degree of absurdity, which, after all one's acquaintance with human folly, is nearly beyond belief. Besides, whoever talks of a miracle, at the Institution of the Eucharist, ought carefully to enquire, what he means by miracles—and what were the objects of our Lord's miracles—and he will find that he is involving himself in perplexities, from which he can never get disentangled, till he has fairly abandoned the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

We have just seen that, accustomed, as the Apostles were, to attribute the mighty works they witnessed, to our Lord's miraculous power, they would habitually judge of that power by its visible effects. When they perceived no change, they would never suppose that the power had been in operation. How, then, would men, who had been thus trained, be led, by our Lord's words in instituting the Eucharist, to the imagination that a miracle had been wrought? Dr Wiseman's appeal to the experience of the Apostles in this matter is decidedly adverse to his own views; and not less so is his argument



drawn from the lessons, received from their divine Master, respecting the possibility of all things with God—and the necessity of belief in that possibility—and the evil of unbelief\*. This reasoning is applicable solely on the unauthorized opinion, that the Apostles must have understood our Lord's words literally, and that the lessons they had received would have rendered their minds superior to physical difficulties. The truth, however, is—that the idea of physical difficulties would never occur to them. There was nothing to suggest it. Our Lord spoke to them, as he had been in the habit of speaking, in figurative language; and no evidence, I will venture to say, has yet been produced, in proof that they took his words in a literal sense.

Dr Wiseman—after estimating, in his manner, the probable effect of our Lord's words, upon the unlearned Apostles—passes on to consider the same words with respect to philosophical minds. And here again, he avails himself of that glaringly unwarrantable assumption, which I have already pointed out, in terms of not more than merited censure. In this case, indeed, nothing can be more improper and offensive than his manner of stating his notions on the subject. On the one hand, he supposes the doctrine of Transubstantiation to be formally and explicitly revealed: and, on the other, the doctrine to be rejected by the philosophers, on the ground of its being irreconcilable with the

\* Lectures, pp. 209—213.



observed laws of nature, and the ascertained properties of matter. To say the truth, his language is rhetorical enough, to excite suspicion respecting the validity of his argument:

“Hitherto I have spoken only of the Apostles, because they were the proper judges of our Lord’s meaning; we may, however, boldly ask, who is the philosopher who will venture to define the properties of matter so nicely, as to say that they would have been right, in weighing them against an Almighty’s declaration? It is easy to talk of reason and common sense, and the laws which regulate bodies; but when we come to introduce these matters into theology, and pretend to decide where they clash with a mystery, and where a mystery rides triumphant over them, we not only bring profane scales into the sanctuary, but we are mixing a dangerous ingredient with our faith.” (p. 213.)

The quotation might have been farther extended; but from the preceding extract, the reader will easily discover the force and character of the whole train of reasoning. To all that has been advanced on this topic, I would offer the following reply. Bellarmine, as we have seen—and some of the ablest defenders of the Roman Catholic faith—have allowed that the language of Scripture, according to the ordinary rules of interpretation, is not of itself sufficient to establish the doctrine of Transubstantiation; maintaining that, for that purpose, recourse must be had to the authority of the (so called) infallible Church; which determines, not only what is Scripture, but what is the meaning of Scripture. Now, whatever the learned author may think, people in general will be of opinion, that

Bellarmino, and other great advocates of the same cause, understood the import of Scripture language quite as well as Dr Wiseman, and made as good use of it in argument. When, therefore, they find this zealous lecturer laying down the law, as if he had completely settled the point in question, by virtue of "Scriptural Proofs"—they will be pretty well satisfied that he has greatly overrated his own achievements—and much more so, when they take into account the precise value of his exertions for that purpose. In short, to represent the conversion of bread and wine into the real body and blood of Christ as a mystery positively revealed in Holy Writ—and thus to exhibit those who urge the improbability of such conversion, from the observed qualities of material things, as in a manner fighting against God—is what Dr Wiseman has ventured to do, but what sober-minded men of all persuasions will agree in thinking that he ought not to have done. It is because the mystery is *not* clearly revealed in Scripture—and because the doctrine relates to things cognizable by the senses—that men may, without impiety or presumption, pay some attention to arguments drawn from their knowledge of material objects.

For myself, I should not perhaps be disposed to go so far, as some people would, in the use of arguments of the kind just mentioned; but so long as I retain the use of my understanding, I cannot but proceed to the extent which I am now about to

mention. Christianity was, by divine appointment, founded on miracles; that is, on events of the truth of which the senses of men were the judges. I should therefore beforehand deem it very improbable that the religion, so founded on the testimony of the senses, would contain any thing, relating to objects of the senses, which could not be believed, but in contradiction to the senses; because in that case the religion would have the appearance of undermining the ground upon which it had to rest. The least, however, that could be expected, in such a case, would be—that there should be no ambiguity—no doubt of the point being designed to be a matter of faith. Again, on a survey of the New Testament, we find sensible objects made, so to speak, the elements of divine knowledge—earthly things the steps to heavenly things. As an external revelation, therefore, Christianity, from first to last, arrives at the understanding and the affections, by means of those faculties which give us intelligence of the processes of nature. In other words, for the establishment of Christianity, several of the laws of nature underwent a temporary suspension, in the presence of those who were sufficiently acquainted with them to know that they *were* suspended; and our Lord, in his instructions, availed himself of that ordinary intelligence, which he knew that the people possessed, of natural appearances. Under these circumstances, we ask for the text in which we are required to believe something, affirmed of material objects, in



contradiction to the evidence of the senses; and we are referred to a passage, in which our Lord, just before his crucifixion, is instituting a rite to be observed, in remembrance of him, by his disciples then present, and by the faithful to the end of time. Without again reciting particulars familiar to every one, we are, it is alleged, there required to believe that the bread and the wine which our Lord presented, as his body and his blood, and which, to every sense capable of distinguishing one thing from another, still continued to be bread and wine, were really converted into the material body and blood of Christ. Now this does appear to be in itself the very grossest conception that ever entered into the mind of man—a notion of such a character as to make almost every other extravagance of opinion look, on comparison, contemptibly small. A true account of the rise and progress of the doctrine would form a curious chapter in the history of human nature. But let that pass. The strange doctrine now treated of can be deduced, from the words referred to, solely by the most rigorously literal interpretation which it is possible to apply to any passage whatever:—a mode of interpretation which can seldom be applied to our Lord's discourses, without extracting meanings which no sane mind can suppose to have been intended. On the contrary, by interpreting the words conformably to what was obviously designed for common apprehension—in short, as the general tenor of our Lord's language



requires—the bread and wine become the symbols, the tokens, the memorials, of the body and blood of Christ, thereafter to be received in remembrance of him. Now I do maintain—not only in justice to that reason to which Revelation makes its first appeal, but from reverence for those Scriptures which are designed to direct us, where reason cannot but fail to do so—that a case is here presented, in which the testimony of the senses has an undeniable claim to be taken into account. On their testimony Christianity was founded—the truth of their testimony was every where assumed by our Lord in his discourses:—did, then, our Saviour, when leaving his disciples, propose to them a doctrine, relating to objects before their eyes, which, at once, set at nought that evidence on which their faith rested? We cannot believe this on the dubious interpretation of a single text. It ought to be stamped upon the page of Scripture in characters too distinct to be mistaken.

Dr Wiseman proceeds to compare the objections, from natural appearances, to the doctrine of Transubstantiation—with the objections, of a similar kind, to the doctrine of the Trinity. “All the experience,” he writes, “and observations of philosophers, on the law of numbers, must have led them to conclude that the very term, *Triune*, or three in one, was opposed to natural reasoning;” and yet we receive the doctrine, on the authority of Scripture. Does it then, in his opinion, make no differ-

ence, whether we are considering the material objects, about which the doctrine of Transubstantiation is concerned—or the mode of the Divine existence, in relation to the Trinity? Can he suppose that we are as capable of judging in the latter case as in the former? The learned author knows very well—as well as every reader of this volume—that the fact is far otherwise. If, indeed, I were to enter upon an extended argument on this point, it would seem as if I imagined him to have alleged the instance of the Trinity, with any other design than to mystify the subject; and that would be to derogate from the character of his understanding, in a manner of which I should be sorry if there were any example, in the present work. With a similar feeling, I mention, without discussion, the instance of the Incarnation adduced for the same purpose. The result, however, of the dissertation, on reasoning from external appearances, shall be transcribed:

“Thus much may suffice upon the motives given for a necessity of rejecting the literal sense of the words of Institution. You have seen that it is contrary to the first principles of hermeneutics to allow any such supposed difficulties to interfere in their interpretation, or to enter as an element in it; you have seen, that they can no more be admitted in regard to the Trinity, Incarnation, or any other divine mystery. This is more than sufficient to justify us in refusing to admit them into the disquisition of this doctrine.” (p. 218.)

The gravity with which the learned author thus perseveres in appealing to “the first principles of hermeneutics—” as if they were entities independent

of his own volition—as if they were not as much contrivances for producing convenient results, as a machine is a contrivance, for executing certain purposes—is truly wonderful. And after he had discoursed, in the fifth lecture, of “the motive or reason which, in some texts, drives us from the literal sense, as involving a contradiction\*,” how admirable is the self-possession, which emboldens him to declare, in the sixth lecture, that “it is contrary to the first principles of hermeneutics to allow any such supposed difficulties to interfere in interpretation, or to enter as an element into it.” All this indicates no common mind; and yet, if I may be allowed to express my own private opinion on such a subject, I cannot but consider it as the very perfection of those great qualities which I have pointed out, to be able steadily to maintain, that “such supposed difficulties can no more be admitted in regard to the doctrine of Transubstantiation, than they can respecting the Trinity, Incarnation, or any other divine mystery.” There is something grand in this kind of superiority over the laws of the moral and the intellectual world.

Before closing his sixth lecture, Dr Wiseman adduces some positive arguments in favour of the literal sense; partly drawn from the construction of the words themselves, and partly, from the circumstances in which they were pronounced....The first argument, from construction, is derived from

\* Lectures, p. 181.



Dr Adam Clarke's interpretation of the words used on presenting the cup: τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης, τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν: in which, "almost every syllable, especially the articles," is made "singularly emphatic." If the emphatic significations imagined by Dr Clarke really belong to the passage, they appear to be quite as available to the Protestant view, as to that of Dr Wiseman. Enlarge, as much as you can, your ideas of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, and the Eucharistical wine may still be a fit symbol, and memorial, of that blood.... The other argument, from construction, depends upon the additions to the words, "This is my body," preserved by St Luke and St Paul; the former annexing to them, "which is GIVEN for you"—the latter, "which is BROKEN for you." The argument is treated in the following manner:

"I observe, in the first place, that not a single passage occurs in Scripture, where the two verbs to *give* and to *break* are synonymous, except where spoken of food; the epithets therefore apply not to the future state of Christ's body in his passion, but to the thing then before the Apostles. 2. The verb κλάω, as Schleusner observes, never is used in the New Testament, except of bread or food. He only quotes this very passage as an exception, applying it to the passion. 3. I think it will be admitted as not improbable, that Jesus used both words, τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ σῶμά μου, τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κλώμενον καὶ διδόμενον: "this is my body, that which is broken and given for you." The phrase exactly corresponds with the narrative of St Luke: λαβὼν ἄρτον... ἔκλασε καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς: "taking bread, he broke and gave to them." It is worthy of remark, that St Paul has preserved in his narrative only the verb, "he



broke," which corresponds to the participle which he selected of the two, in his formulary." (p. 221.)

According to my own feelings, the preceding observations strongly confirm the impression, that the figurative interpretation is the true one. *To break and to give* is, in the New Testament, the common phrase applied to bread; and cannot be certainly affirmed, as the learned author admits, to be applied to any thing else. Our Saviour *broke and gave* bread to the disciples; and in presenting it, spoke of that which was *broken and given*: but the rite then instituted, being designed "to show the Lord's death, till he came" (1 Cor. xi. 26), could not but be symbolical of that event: and thus the bread broken and given represented, by a striking figure, Christ's body broken (wounded) and given for the sins of the world. Dr Wiseman may devote his whole life to minute verbal criticism on the words of Institution; but his efforts, to establish the Roman Catholic interpretation on sure ground, will be to no purpose. He may dwell, as long as he pleases, upon the word *τοῦτο*; but he will never persuade any man of plain understanding, that it is "identical with the *σῶμα* or body." When he affirms that "the phrase, 'This thing, which is broken and given, is my body,' forms a more definite expression, much more difficult to be applied to express a figure, than the vague *this*"—he will be told that "this thing" means "this bread;" and will be reminded of his own principle—that, "when

two material objects appear to be identical, we are compelled to fly, by a positive repugnance and contradiction, to another (a figurative) sense." In short, when every particle of the expression has been twisted in every possible way, it will still be found that the figurative meaning is the most obvious and the most natural....The specific connexion of "this" with *the cup*, in the other part of the Sacrament (τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον), and the analogy between the two parts, as I have already observed, deprive Dr Wiseman of all ground for maintaining, that "this," in the former part, can refer to any thing but *the bread*.

The learned author mentions three particulars, relating to the circumstances in which the words were spoken, as confirming his literal interpretation.

1. "Our blessed Saviour, alone with his chosen twelve, on the point of suffering, is here pouring out the treasures of his love:"—and this he did as effectually, and as affectingly, according to the figurative, as according to the literal interpretation.
2. "He is making his last will and testament, an occasion when all men speak as simply and as intelligibly as possible:"—and does not this afford good evidence that he was not proposing, to the disciples, a doctrine which has bewildered the understandings of many of the acutest men—ever since it was promulgated as a tenet of the Latin Church?
3. "He tells his dear friends and brethren, that the time is come when he would speak plain and without

parables to them :”—was that then the time at which we are to suppose him to have uttered—what, if taken in the Roman Catholic sense, must have been—the most enigmatical language that had ever proceeded from his mouth? If Dr Wiseman should persevere in writing after this fashion, he will thoroughly convince the world, that the doctrine, of the Real, Corporal Presence in the Eucharist, has nothing to rest upon, but the authority of the Church of Rome.

## PART II. SECTION III.

### OBJECTIONS TO A LITERAL INTERPRETATION.

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DR WISEMAN, in his seventh lecture, professes to notice "the objections made by Protestants," to the Roman Catholic interpretation of the words of Institution; but he seems to have mainly intended a reply to some strictures, on a preceding work of his, by Dr Lee, the Regius Professor of Hebrew in this University. So far as I can perceive, the origin and progress of the controversy may be easily stated.... Calvin, Melancthon and other reformers "argued against the literal interpretation of the words, on the ground that our Saviour spoke Hebrew, and not Greek; and that, in the Hebrew language, there is not a single word meaning *to represent*. Hence they concluded, that any one wishing to express in that language, that one object was figurative of another, he could not possibly do it otherwise than by saying that it *was* that thing\*." The answer to this was, that our Lord did not speak Hebrew, but Syro-Chaldaic. Dr Adam Clarke however affirmed that neither did the Syro-Chaldaic contain any word signifying *to represent*; and Mr Hartwell Horne adopted the opinion. In 1828, Dr Wiseman published a tract—which I have

\* Lectures, p. 231.



not seen—entitled “*Horæ Syriacæ* ;” in which he maintained that the Syriac language possessed many words with that meaning. Dr Lee, in a note to his *Prolegomena* to Bagster’s Polyglot Bible, put forth some animadversions on the “*Horæ Syriacæ* ;” allowing, at the same time, that Dr Wiseman had correctly stated the fact, with regard to the Syriac language. Dr Lee’s animadversions having reference to the doctrine of the Syrian Church with regard to the Real Presence, as well as to Dr Wiseman’s accuracy in alleging certain writers, in connexion with that subject—these are the points principally discussed in the seventh lecture....I mention these circumstances, to show that, in passing over that lecture, I am omitting nothing which is required by my undertaking.

I may, however, observe that the peculiarity in question is allowed to belong to the Hebrew language: that that language—by itself and by its representative, the Septuagint—had great effect upon the language of the New Testament: that, in deciding the meaning of the words of Institution, the idiom of the Hebrew and the Septuagint cannot but, as in other cases, be taken into account: and that the idiom, prevailing in those ancient authorities, tends strongly to confirm the figurative interpretation which is contended for by Protestant Communities.

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## PART II. SECTION IV.

### ST PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF THE EUCHARIST.

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ST PAUL twice adverts, in a very remarkable manner, to the institution of the Lord's Supper. In the one instance, his object is to point out, to his Corinthian converts, the peril of idolatry, in which they were placed, by partaking of the sacrifices offered to idols. In the other, he is endeavouring to rectify some great irregularities, of which the Corinthians were guilty, in their mode of observing the Eucharistical rite. On the former of these instances, Dr Wiseman presents the following remarks :

“In 1 Cor. x. 16, the Apostle touches quite incidentally upon the point ; for he is speaking of the guilt of participating in the idolatrous sacrifices of the heathens. He enforces this by the question—‘The cup of benediction which we bless, is it not the partaking of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not partaking of the body of the Lord?’ The word here rendered *partaking*, or communion, is used several other times in the following verses: ‘Behold Israel according to the flesh: are not they that eat of the sacrifices, *partakers* of the altar?’ The adjective here used corresponds exactly to the substantive in the first passage, κοινωνοὶ, κοινωνία. The word is here applied to the real participation of the sacrifices on the altar, and should therefore have a similar power in the other.” (p. 259, 260.)

It is scarcely possible to conceive less to be made of a passage of Scripture, avowedly adduced in support of any doctrine, than has been made by Dr Wiseman, in the case of 1 Cor x. 16. So darkly, indeed, is the writer's meaning insinuated, that there would be great rashness in putting forth even a guess upon the subject. Instead, therefore, of any attempt of that kind, let me briefly state what there really is to be found, in this 10th chapter, tending to elucidate the nature of the Institution under consideration.

St Paul begins to treat of things offered to idols, as far back as the 8th chapter; in which he gives some important admonitions to those who, being aware that an idol *was nothing*—no real being, thought that they might partake of the sacrifices, without scruple. The Apostle, however, reminds such persons that, through their example, others, who had not that knowledge, might be led to eat things offered to what they deemed real deities—and so “perish.” After a discourse, which is more closely connected with this matter than at first sight appears, St Paul in the 10th chapter expressly resumes the subject of idolatry, as connected with the partaking of the sacrifices offered to idols; and thus he proceeds:

“Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. 15. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17. For we being many



are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

From these verses, every one must see that it is, not by any transubstantiation of the bread and the wine, but *by means* of the bread broken, of which all are partakers, and of the cup blessed, of which all drink, that the participants enjoy a communion of the body and blood of Christ. This becomes still more manifest as the Apostle proceeds in his argument. He first refers to the Jews: "Behold Israel after the flesh:" and, with regard to them, asks, "Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?"—manifestly intending to say, that the eating of the bread and drinking of the cup, in the Eucharist, had the same reference to the communion of the body and blood of Christ, which the eating of the sacrifices had to the partaking of the altar. St Paul applies all this to the partaking of the sacrifices offered to idols; intimating that the partaking of things so offered would, in the same way, bring the partakers into communion with the false deities which the idols represented. "And I would not," he says, "that ye should have fellowship with devils—οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι." Moreover, as if to make the argument still stronger, for the permanence of the material substances present at the Eucharist, he adds: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils."



Without farther comment, I leave these passages to make their due impression upon the reader's mind. Hermeneutical chemistry has great power, as we have seen, in changing the appearances of things; but by no means can it extract, from this chapter, that which possesses the slightest affinity to the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

The other passage of St Paul, alluded to at the opening of this section, now demands attention. After giving an account, which has already been noticed, of the Institution of the Eucharist, the Apostle (1 Cor. xi. 26—29) draws the following consequences :

“As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. 27. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh his own damnation, not discerning the Lord's body.”

The word “guilty” (ἐνοχος), in v. 27, Dr Wiseman interprets by the same word in James ii. 10; where it is said that “whoever offendeth against any one commandment is *guilty of all* ;” that is, “offends against all God's commandments.” Thus the unworthy communicant offends against the body and blood of Christ; or, as Dr Wiseman otherwise illustrates the matter, is *reus læsæ majestatis*—commits an injury against the body and blood of our Lord's Sacred Person. The learned author then

contends, that such an expression can be properly applicable to nothing less than a personal offence to the body of Christ; and asks, "Whether a disrespectful or unworthy approach to a morsel of bread, symbolical of him, can be characterised as equal to it, and be designated by a name positively describing it\*?"

Here, at least, we perceive how trivial a ceremony Dr Wiseman would esteem this solemn rite, instituted by our Lord in remembrance of himself, supposing the material elements employed to have simply a symbolical character. In that case, those consecrated emblems of our Saviour's passion, which so affectingly show his death till he come, would to him appear to have but little value. He writes of "a disrespectful or unworthy approach to a morsel of bread"—as if the language of the Apostle were quite overcharging any offence which could possibly be committed, according to the Protestant interpretation. What is worse, he goes on to illustrate his notions of the subject, by means of an anecdote, which, in my opinion, indicates the most grievous insensibility to holy things. My trust is, that he will live long enough to lament, that he ever attempted so to withdraw the minds of men, from the serious consideration of the point in question. On reading Dr Wiseman's observations on this subject, a passage of Scripture occurred to me which I cannot persuade myself to withhold. It will assuredly

\* Lectures, p. 262.

be thought striking—as a conclusion to the preceding remarks upon the contempt of an ordinance instituted by our Lord, in so striking a manner—at a time when every word and action of his irresistibly commanded the most devout attention:—“He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” (Heb. x. 28, 29.)

In estimating the sanctity of a rite—the reverence due to it—and the crime of desecrating it—are we to be guided solely by our own estimate of its objects and character? Is the divine authority by which it is enjoined of little or no account? Why is he who offends against one commandment guilty of all—but because he has contemned the authority of the Law-giver himself? Dr Wiseman’s own illustration might have taught him to entertain other sentiments and adopt other language. In fine, supposing our Lord, in the manner with which we are all acquainted, to have presented the Eucharistical elements as the symbols of his body and blood, and to have appointed them for the communion of his body and blood—my reason and my feelings combine to tell me that the man who treats them with disrespect is guilty of the body and blood of Christ.



The inconsistencies which I have discovered, in Dr Wiseman's lectures, are so numerous, that I ought not, I confess, to be much shocked by any thing of that kind, which may occur towards the close of the volume. But there are cases in which one's moral nature instantly revolts against inconsistency:—when, for instance, the subjects under consideration relate to things held peculiarly sacred. When Dr Wiseman represented St Paul's words—"guilty of the body and blood of Christ"—as much too strong to be applied to any offence against *the symbols* of the body and blood—my disposition was, to attribute his proceeding to a defect in his religious impressions. In the subsequent paragraph—one of those perplexed paragraphs with which the work abounds—he maintains the directly opposite opinion; and affirms that, on the symbolical interpretation, such an expression "would be rather a diminution than an aggravation of the transgression...and that it is but a poor characterisation of an offence against the Son of God, when his body is not there." Supposing the author to be conscious of what he is doing, there really appears to me in all this something so reprehensible, that I will not venture to express my sentiments on the subject. I would rather leave the matter to the reader's indignation.

The next paragraph which I shall notice—and which, I really think, may, in magnitude of misrepresentation, compete with anything to be found



in any volume, save that of Dr Wiseman—is to the following effect :

“ St Paul goes on to inculcate the necessity of proving or trying one’s self before partaking of this sacred banquet, ‘ *because* he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment or damnation to himself, *not discerning the body of the Lord*. The crime before described is now represented as, not discerning or distinguishing the body of Christ, from other or profane food. A natural question presents itself: what ground is there for this distinction, if the body of the Lord be not present to be distinguished? It may be a holier food, or a spiritual food, but not so immeasurably distinct from all others, as the body of Christ must necessarily be.” (p. 263.)

Before I offer any observations on this account, I wish to remark that Dr Wiseman—alluding, in a subsequent page (266), to this subject—describes St Paul as “characterising the transgression just as he would transgressions against the real body and blood of Christ, *if present*, but in words totally inapplicable to the Eucharist, if these be absent from it.”

Dr Wiseman’s readers have, too frequently, sufficient reason to be dubious respecting his real meaning; but in the present instance, there can be no mistake in that matter. The assertion manifestly is, that St Paul’s reprehension of the proceedings of the Corinthians, in relation to the Eucharist, was conveyed in terms totally inapplicable to the subject, unless the actual body and blood of Christ had been present. In order to settle this point, the best plan will be to ascertain the

nature of the charges against them, from the Apostle's own words:

“When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken. What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not?” 1 Cor. xi. 20—22.

Such was the thoughtless, disorderly, irreverent manner, in which the Corinthians presumed to celebrate the Lord's Supper; and such were the selfish feelings, and almost incredible excesses, with which the rite—if the word rite be not under such circumstances inapplicable—was attended. Instead of assembling for the purpose of a communion of one bread and one cup—“one was hungry and another was drunken.” Now, when the facts of the case are thus fairly brought forward, I do not believe that even Dr Wiseman would venture to repeat his assertion, that St Paul's charges against the Corinthians are totally inapplicable to the Eucharist, unless the Corporal Presence be supposed. The truth is, that the Apostle—in endeavouring to convince them of the necessity of examining themselves, before they ventured “to eat of that bread and drink of that cup”—and in impressing them with the thought that “he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body”—did not argue with them as serious participants, who had mistaken the nature of The Presence, but remonstrated with

them on the flagrant impropriety of their practices—so unbecoming a solemn institution of their Lord, for the communion of the faithful in his body and blood. In whatever point of view the Eucharist be considered, there was in such a case too much ground for the language of the Apostle.

We know that there is nothing, however sacred and momentous, which is not liable to be perverted from its original design; and we may generally perceive in what way a perversion is the most likely to ensue. Let us, in this point of view, consider the Eucharist—assuming that, from the period of its institution, a transubstantiation of its elements was understood to take place; so that our Lord became corporeally present—present in his entire human and divine nature. The consciousness of a Deity leads men to adoration—to acts of worship; and, in a case like this, may easily lead to superstitious rites and gross idolatry. Such is the danger to be apprehended on this assumption....Let us now, in the same point of view, consider the Eucharist, according to the Protestant interpretation—as exhibiting the symbols of our Lord's body and blood. If, along with this doctrine, the notion of the Lord's Table—the Lord's Supper—be taken into account—we can imagine that the rite may insensibly acquire too much of an appearance of a social repast; and thus at length the religious character of the meeting be nearly lost in the convivial. On this side, the danger lies in the profanation of sacred things...



Idolatry, then, results from the perversion of the Roman Catholic system; and profaneness from that of the Protestant system; and so obviously do these consequences follow, that no reasonable person, I am persuaded, would hesitate to declare the causes, when the consequences were laid before him. Now, profaneness was the sin of the Corinthians in this matter. Here, therefore, we have what I take to be a clear proof that they had never heard of the doctrine of Transubstantiation.

The learned author—after some attempts to show the admirable consistency of his arguments throughout his lectures, and the greatness of their united effect—goes on to contrast the method of discussion adopted by Roman Catholics, with that which distinguishes Protestant writers—in the following terms:

“We construct our argument in each case from all the parts of the discourse, considered in relation with the historical circumstances, the philology of the language used, the character of our Saviour, his customary method of teaching, and every other subsidiary means of arriving at a true meaning. They, on the contrary, fasten upon some little phrase, in some corner of the narrative, which seems to favour their idea, or hunt out some other passage of Scripture somewhat resembling the words under examination; and, overlooking all the mass of accumulative evidence which we possess, maintain that it must all give way before the hint which the favourite little text affords, or be interpreted by that imaginary parallelism.” (p. 268.)

Dr Wiseman conceives the difference, thus pointed out, to be remarkably exemplified by his



own lectures on the Eucharist—whether relating to the sixth chapter of St John, or to the words of Institution; and there are probably many of his readers who are fully convinced of the truth of his representations. The pages of this volume however, if I do not mistake, would tend to shake their confidence in his method of proceeding. Plausibility is the characteristic of the learned author's labours. On their surface there is a smoothness—a gloss—which can scarcely fail to beguile the individual, who is content with a hasty perusal. And how few, of those who read and pronounce an opinion, have the leisure or the inclination—even supposing them to have the requisite attainments—to examine such a work with sufficient attention to enable them to form a correct judgment on the subject. Without the slightest wish to depreciate the lectures or their author, I cannot help here stating, that I have never met with another production so abounding in petty criticism on small portions of text apart from their contexts—in hermeneutical devices of every kind—and in arguments which, being directly opposed to each other, serve only to cause perplexity. The author is subtile, but not sagacious; he is dextrous but not circumspect; he is learned after the manner of a controversialist, not after that of a student. It would have afforded me real pleasure, if I could have pointed out a single instance of fair, manly investigation in the course of his lectures; and I sincerely regret

that he has not enabled me to pay him the compliment.

Little now remains for me, but to offer a few remarks, upon Dr Wiseman's method of disposing of some Protestant objections to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The first objection, which he has noticed, depends upon the facts, that our Lord called the contents of the cup, "the fruit of the vine," and that St Paul spoke of the other element, as bread—"whosoever shall eat *this bread* unworthily." The truth, indeed, is that the objection drawn from St Paul, extends to both elements; his expression being—"whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." But for the purpose of showing the inaccuracy of Bishop Tomline and Mr Faber, who had adduced our Lord's words respecting the cup, as "the fruit of the vine," he endeavours to make out that "the words were spoken before the consecration, or the institution of the Eucharist." In taking this view of the matter, he resolutely stands by St Luke—who states that, *before* the Eucharistical rite, our Lord said, "I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, till the kingdom of God shall come;" and shows no favour to St Matthew—by whom, as he affirms, the words were "placed vaguely" at the conclusion of the rite. Whether the words were uttered before or after the rite—or whether both before and after—I will not decide. On any supposition, they were uttered

in a way which indicated no intention that what was "the fruit of the vine" should, at any time, be taken for any thing else. The late Roman Catholic translator of the four Gospels has pointed out (Luke xxii. 19) the mode in which the members of his Communion are enabled the most easily to get over the little stumbling-blocks they may meet with, in the Scripture accounts of the Eucharist. He writes interrogatively, but his meaning is plain; and he specifies "omissions," but the expression may, without injury to the sentiment, be made more general: "How are we," he writes, "to reconcile such differences [in the Gospels] with the opinion of those who pretend that it was the object of these four narratives to leave to the disciples of the Apostles, and through them, to succeeding generations, a full account of all the doctrines and precepts delivered by our blessed Lord?" He who has the command of Tradition can never be at a loss. There is no difficulty which an Infallible Church may not overcome—no deficiency which it may not supply.

But to return to Dr Wiseman:—who admits that St Paul's phrases—"this bread," and "this cup"—refer to the Eucharistical elements after consecration. In reply, the learned author first represents Protestants, as availing themselves of a few straggling texts—like those just mentioned—in opposition to a great mass of evidence in favour of the doctrine of Transubstantiation—precisely as the



Socinians make the most of a few incidental expressions, apparently adverse to that of the Trinity. Now, if the reader will recollect the mode in which the Council of Trent disposed of the sixth chapter of St John—that chapter upon which Dr Wiseman has laid such great stress—and will also bear in mind Bellarmine's doubts as to the effect of the entire argument from Scripture, apart from Church authority—he will, I apprehend, be of opinion that a less assuming character would have better suited the concluding pages of the lectures on the Eucharist. If, again, the reader will take into account, the serious objections, adduced in the present volume, to the learned author's statements as they presented themselves—and, I will venture to say, the complete destruction of those positions in which he mainly trusted—the representation of Protestant proceedings, above given, will not seem to accord very well with matter of fact. It is not, as the learned author would insinuate, because St Paul calls the consecrated element “this bread”—that all the Roman Catholic “complication of proof is deemed to be worth nothing;” but because the individual particles have not the kind of validity which can enable the whole “complication of proof” to establish an article of faith. In this manner, after a careful examination of the arguments for the Corporal Presence, and a conviction of their insufficiency, such phrases as “this bread”—by indicating that no change of substance has taken



place—strongly confirm the Protestant view of the subject. Whether Dr Wiseman misunderstands the principles on which the doctrine of Transubstantiation is opposed, I know not. He grievously misrepresents them.

The learned author next alleges that Roman Catholics, notwithstanding their belief in the change of substance, “call the sacred elements by the names of their appearances, after the consecration:” inso-much that, in the canon of the mass, the “bread” and “cup” are still mentioned—“panem sanctum vitæ æternæ, et calicem salutis perpetuæ.” May not, then, St Paul’s language be consistent with a similar belief on the part of the Apostle? If the Apostle had anywhere used expressions really indicating his belief in a change of substance, the argument would be entitled to great consideration; but as we do not find that to be the case, it becomes us to allow such phrases as “this bread”—“this cup”—to have their due effect upon our interpretation of the contexts—more especially when we find that, by that plan, Scripture is brought into accordance with itself, and with those natural apprehensions of things, which we are never called upon to disregard. Roman Catholics can answer for their own meaning; and when, “both from its appearance, and from its properties,” they call a substance *bread*—they can inform us (as they do) that they are really talking and writing of something else—of something essentially different:—but St Paul has not so explained

himself, nor has he given any just occasion for that kind of explanation; and those persons, who do not scruple to employ such strange perversions of language for their own purposes, ought assuredly to hesitate long, before they attribute them to the pen of an inspired Apostle.

Dr Wiseman, thirdly, dwells upon the miracle, of sight given to a man born blind, as recorded in the 9th chapter of St John. The Evangelist, in relating the occurrences subsequent to the miracle, uses the expression—"They say unto the blind man again;" and the learned author concludes that, as all reasoning from that expression, against the truth of the miracle, "would be rejected with indignation"—so likewise ought all reasoning from the phrase "this bread," with regard to the doctrine of the Corporal Presence. Let us compare the circumstances of the two cases. In the one case, we have detailed to us, with the greatest particularity, the fact of sight given to a man born blind—the general surprise of the people—and the captious examination of the man himself, by the Pharisees. In the other case, we have no intimation of any intention to perform a miracle—no account of any miracle having been performed—no appearance of any one present having ever thought of a miracle. In the one case, during a long enquiry into the matter, the man, upon whom the miracle had been wrought, is called "him that aforetime was blind"—"him that had received his sight"—"the man that

was blind ;”—and *once*—as if to avoid a cumbersome periphrasis, and yet adopt an expression which could mislead no one—simply, “the blind man.” In the other case, what was originally bread, and what (as every one’s senses testified) continued to be bread, is called by its own proper name, and by no other name. So opposed to each other are the two cases ; in which Dr Wiseman seems to have discovered a sufficient degree of similarity, to enable him to reason from the one to the other. How great must be the mortification of being driven to have recourse to such arguments. There is, indeed, something so insipid in these closing animadversions, that the mortification, of having to put down a few words in reply, appears almost equal to that which must unavoidably attend the production of the animadversions themselves....And yet Dr Wiseman perseveres in this sort of argument. “Again,” he writes, “in Genesis [Exodus], after Aaron’s rod on the one side, and those of the Egyptian magicians on the other, are said to have been changed into serpents, it is added : ‘but Aaron’s *rod* devoured their *rods*.’ Therefore the infidel may conclude, that no change had taken place in the rods\*.” Here, as in the instance of the blind man, the change is positively stated ; and stated to have been observed by those present ; on what ground, then,

\* Lectures, pp. 273, 274. The reference given is Gen. viii. 12, instead of Exod. vii. 12. I may observe that the references throughout the work are erroneous to a very troublesome degree.



can an inference be drawn, and be applied to an instance, in which not a word, respecting any change, is to be found?....The miracle of water turned into wine (John ii. 9) furnishes the final argument of this class: "When the ruler of the feast had tasted *the water that was made wine*, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew *the water* knew):"—Here *the wine* is called *the water*. Now, in the first place a conspicuous miracle was wrought, and acknowledged. In the second, can any thing be more obvious than that the term, *the water*, immediately refers to the term, *the water that was made wine*, just before? It was clearly used, as exhibiting what had preceded, in an abbreviated form. How unlike are all these passages, in themselves and their application, to St Paul's phrases—"this bread"—"this cup"—in connexion with the subject to which they refer! The modes of speech, touching the blind man, the rods, and the wine, can lead to no mistake, either in fact or in doctrine; but I would ask—If Transubstantiation had been designed for a primary article of the Christian faith, can we suppose that the very texts of Scripture, in which it is said to be found, should present expressions, so adverse to its truth, as the accounts of the institution of the Eucharist really do contain?

Passing over the learned author's remarks upon "the philosophical question" concerning the relation of our Lord's Corporal Presence to space and



time—I have now only to advert once more—and but for a moment—to hermeneutical principles. We have ascertained their nature, and witnessed their operation, under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Dr Wiseman; who also, by way of contrast, mentions their effect, under the management of the Protestant Dr Eichhorn. On the one hand, hermeneutical principles are employed, as we have seen, to vindicate the literal meaning of the words of Institution—on the other, they are employed, as Dr Wiseman informs us, to *construct* a figurative meaning. With regard to the hermeneutics of the Lectures on the Eucharist, the work would certainly have been much more to the purpose without them. They offered, indeed, a vast collection of materials exquisitely adapted to the exercise of that intellectual dexterity, which the learned author is manifestly too fond of exhibiting:—a kind of dexterity well calculated to perplex or amaze the beholder—but altogether useless, if designed either to convince or instruct. Besides, the idea of dexterity is strongly associated with that of deception; and the spectator, who has at first been somewhat bewildered by appearances, may finally resolve to investigate the truth of things. In that case, the danger is, lest the ingenious artist may have been too subtile for his own purposes. The controversialist may then discover that plain dealing is the best—in argument, as well as in the general conduct of life; and that perversions and misrepres-

sentations, however refined in their nature and however adroitly employed, tend neither to the credit of the individual, nor to the support of the cause in which he is engaged....As to Dr Eichhorn's hermeneutics, with reference to the words of Institution, I know nothing more of them, than Dr Wiseman has communicated. They may have as little foundation in reason, and be as improperly applied, as some other hermeneutics with which I am acquainted. But be that as it may, we need them not. We leave, to those who have superfluous time, "the Hebrew *protevangelium*, or primitive Gospel, as it is called"—and the fancied misapprehensions and glosses—and the Algebraic result—which the learned author has attributed to Eichhorn. In our view of the matter, there is no figurative meaning to be *constructed*. We give way to no dreams of "vague somethings"—and imperceptible miracles—and incommunicable mysteries—with Dr Wiseman; nor do we, with Dr Eichhorn, arrive at conclusions "truly enigmatical and obscure." We attempt not to force strange senses upon Scripture language. We observe the character of that language; and we find the figurative meaning naturally presenting itself, in the words of Institution....In fine, after some attention to the science of hermeneutics, and its practical effects, my opinion is this—Select a passage of Scripture, of which there are numerous interpretations, and take whichever of them you please—

with such curious felicity has the science been constructed, that it will furnish ample means of defending that interpretation, in the most systematic manner.

## CONCLUSION.

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DR WISEMAN, in the outset of his undertaking, expresses his belief, that more persons are brought over to the Communion of his own Church, by having their minds satisfied respecting the doctrine of Transubstantiation, than by being convinced upon any other point of difference between Roman Catholics and Protestants. This opinion is probably correct; and will account for the learned author's anxiety to establish the doctrine, on the authority of Scripture—an authority common to both parties. Of his principal arguments for the Corporal Presence, I have put the reader in possession, by adducing them in the very terms in which they are given. The comments upon them are designed, not only to rectify error, but also to throw additional light upon the topics discussed. With regard both to the arguments and the comments, glad should I be to think that they have been perused with all the care which is due to the subject professedly examined in this volume. My remarks have been written with a serious feeling of responsibility; and now, at the conclusion of the work, I seem as if I had not quite failed in exposing



misrepresentations, and had really done something towards ascertaining the truth. At all events, I know what my intentions have been; and I cheerfully submit the result of my reflections, to the judgment of those who may take an interest in the matter.

After stating the importance of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, Dr Wiseman dwells, with much complacency, upon "the curious shades of difference, observable in the doctrines of the separated Churches." He mentions Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Œcolampadius and Calvin, among the foreign reformers—and Cranmer and Ridley, among those of our own country—and describes their gradual changes of sentiment, respecting our Lord's presence in the Eucharist:—his object being to contrast the unity and certainty of the Roman Catholic faith, with the varying character of the Protestant belief, on that point. Now, it might easily be shown, that assertions, of the uniformity of faith among Romanists with respect to the Eucharist, must be received with no small abatements; and the preceding pages bear witness to as great discrepancies, among them as among Protestants, on topics closely connected with that Sacrament. But the true answer, to the learned author's remarks, is—that *he* must have but little knowledge of human nature, who is not aware of the effects of long-cherished opinions—and who does not allow for their effects—upon the minds of even the most

learned, intelligent and honest enquirers; and that the gradual changes of sentiment, laid to the charge of the Reformers above-mentioned, so far from presenting any valid objections to their proceedings, afford the best security that they did not, without the most urgent reasons, relinquish doctrines, which they had been taught to regard as Gospel truths.

Having observed upon the differences of creed among Protestants, Dr Wiseman lays down those hermeneutical principles, of which I have already made sufficient mention. Here, however, a difficulty occurs to him, as not unlikely to be felt by his brethren:—"Does not the hermeneutical method tend to diminish the divine authority of the Church and of Tradition, by making the interpretation of Scripture depend upon human ingenuity and learning, rather than upon the authority of an infallible guide\*?" To this question, he replies in the negative. He maintains, however, that "this philological method of learning religion is one of the most pernicious evils we owe to the Reformation; and that far better would it have been, had the plain and only true rule of Church authority continued in its legitimate force:"—acknowledging at the same time the error of the Roman Catholics, in "allowing themselves to be led by Protestants into a war of detail, meeting them as they desired, in partial combats for particular dogmas, instead of steadily fixing them to one fundamental discussion,

\* Lectures, p. 34.

and resolving all compound enquiries into their one simple element—Church authority.” I suppose the learned author, in using language of this kind, to lament the natural effects of things—like a man in these regions, grieving that heat should be the consequence of the sun’s approaching the northern tropic. When Dr Wiseman writes of “the pernicious evils we owe to the Reformation,” he really means the inevitable results of learning and intelligence. Scripture is manifestly addressed to the understandings and the consciences of men; and in a Christian land and an enlightened age, the sacred volume will assuredly be read with all the aids which the records of the past can afford. Under such circumstances, it will be found rather difficult to adopt Dr Wiseman’s plan of “resolving all compound enquiries into their one simple element—Church authority”—if the plan implies some proceeding independent of the interpretation of Scripture. In spite of all the subtilties which may be employed, Church authority will be judged of by the doctrines of Holy Writ; and thus will be established an indissoluble connexion between religion and literature....Condemning however, in the manner we have seen, the explanation of Scripture by means of learning, how does Dr Wiseman defend his own use of hermeneutical principles for that purpose? “The Church,” he says, “decides the dogma, and in some, though few instances, has decided the meaning of texts; but generally speak-



ing, it leaves the discussion of individual passages to the care of theologians"—so far all looks remarkably well; but let the remainder of the sentence be distinctly observed—"who are not at liberty to adopt any interpretation which is not strictly conformable to the dogmas defined." The plain meaning of which is—display as much erudition as you please, upon your texts of Scripture; but recollect that you have a certain doctrine to maintain; and that your erudition must finally, by some means or other, appear to establish it. Now I would ask any one, who feels the importance of religious truth, what kind of confidence can be placed in those who, on such principles, engage in the interpretation of the word of God? Most justly did the learned author affirm, that his hermeneutical method of proceeding would not at all "tend to diminish the divine authority of the Church and of Tradition." Diminish! Why, I defy the ingenuity of man to contrive another scheme, so well calculated to make the Church and Tradition every thing, and the Written Word nothing... Dr Wiseman goes on to present similar opinions, in other language. "When," he writes, "I find the signification of a text definitively settled by the Church, upon the authority of Tradition, I am at once fully satisfied that the decision must be correct; but then I am so much the more fully satisfied in consequence, that the text will give the same result, after the strictest investigation." With regard to a declaration like this,



I will only observe, that the learned author will be extremely fortunate, if there should be a single reader, either Roman Catholic or Protestant, of such simplicity of mind, as to receive his notion, of “the strictest investigation,” without a smile. After all, it must be fairly acknowledged that, in the Lectures on the Eucharist, we find the purposes, to which hermeneutics were avowedly made subservient, fully carried into effect. The suggestions of Scripture have been kept in perfect subordination to the Decrees of the Infallible Church.

THE END.

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